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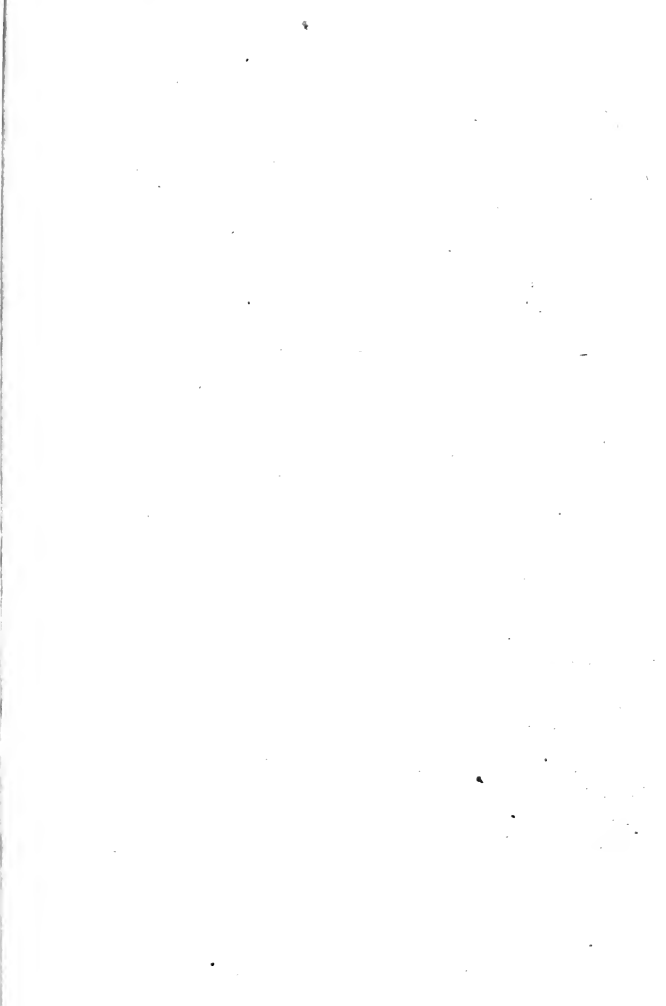
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THE
MICROCOSM.

BY THE AUTHOR

OF

VICISSITUDES IN GENTEEL LIFE.

“ As human happiness consists in hope, those who have arrived at
“ the summit of their wishes here, must point, to render their
“ happiness complete, their hope to Heaven.”

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

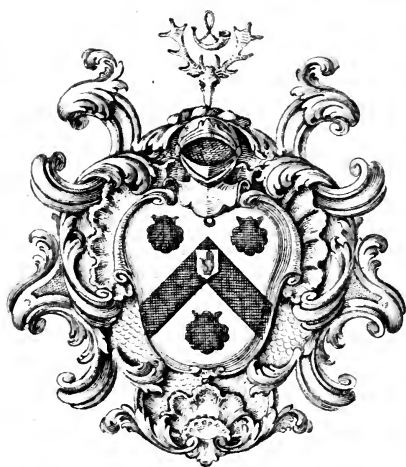
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THE MICROCOSM.

CHAP. CVI.

*Scenes somewhat inconsistent with the Zenonian
Philosophy.*

WITH an eye fixed upon the ocean, as if no hope was left on land, Clifford stood silent. The sailors who were walking on the shore, observed him at a distance, when one who had learned the cause of his dejection, went up to him and said, "Master I dare say you may see her now from the heights, for the wind has been slack, and she is not a very swift failer."

“ Can I ! ” said Clifford, starting as if relieved, without considering that an un-availing view of the vessel could only torment him ; “ Go up : I will follow you ; ” which he did, attended by several others who were furnished with glasses, and seeing a sail at a great distance they all affirmed that it was the Eagle, as none had left the Haven since she did, and it was evident she was going from land. One of them declared he knew her by her yellow sides, and that he would venture a good can of grog it was she.

Clifford, upon this, was greatly agitated, and wildly exclaimed, “ Sure it is possible “ to overtake her ! What can be done ! “ Who can give me any advice ? ”

“ Why master I can advise you, for the “ matter o’ that, an you will be ruled ” — said the sailor who had first addressed him ; “ but ’twill cost you a pretty penny.”

“ I care nothing about cost,” returned Clifford eagerly ; “ and to cut that matter “ short at once, I will give any man “ fifty

“ fifty guineas if he will overtake the
“ Eagle West-Indiaman within twenty-four
“ hours.”

“ Done master !” returned the fellow,
flapping his hand into Clifford’s. “ *I* am
“ your man and wull win your money.
“ Look ye there,” continued he, pointing
to a vessel below ; “ that is the Fly ; the
“ swiftest sailing cutter in all England.
“ She hasn’t her name for nothing.”

“ But when will she be ready ?” hastily
interrogated his employer.

“ Why look ye,” said the tar ; “ bro-
“ ther James is her master, and she was
“ to have gone out on another service in a
“ day or two. I was to have gone in her ;
“ and so I will now, but it shall be upon
“ your business ; and she may be ready in
“ an hour.”

But few words more were spent in talk-
ing. In a very short time Mr. Clifford,
who had given ten guineas earnest, and a
treat to the assistants, found himself upon
the bosom of the deep, flying before the

wind ; a fresh gale having just sprung up as if to aid his design ; for the sailors all assured him that it was a gale from the shore, and would benefit them more than the vessels farther off at sea.

For several hours the hope of Clifford was kept in an equal balance with his apprehension. When the evening advanced and there was no appearance of the object of their pursuit, his spirits gave way ; his fear was predominant, and he passed a night of anxiety, in thinking of his solitary return to London. But when the morning awoke and the sun arose, an object before them, as distant as eye could ken, attracted every one's attention. The large telescope, with which they had furnished themselves, was instantly produced, and a vessel in full sail, on which the sun darted his horizontal rays, was clearly distinguished. A general huzza hailed the appearance, for no one suffered himself to doubt of its being the Eagle. The optical instrument was continually employed : it was soon
observed

observed that they gained upon the sail before them, and it was not long ere her ensigns were known, and her identity declared.

The repining which Clifford had permitted to steal over the usual tenor of his mind, now struck him with its criminality. Conscious of his fault, he left the deck and retired to correct himself.

Thus it is with the generality of mortals: they hope, when they have no reason to fear: but if a cloud steals over their sunshine, hope, which should then be their support, seems enveloped in darkness, and they doubt whether ever "their night" shall again be turned into day,"—they doubt—though they have past experience for their encouragement and the Divine promise for their security!

The Fly was now almost under the Eagle's wing, and the telescope discovered to Clifford, who had re-ascended the deck, the figures of his four friends. The West Indiaman soon backed her sails, as it

was perceived that she was hailed by the cutter, and the gentlemen voyagers on board the first, were stricken with amazement at the appearance of Frederic, who with the utmost celerity boarded their vessel.

“ My dear Clifford ! what brings you here ? ”—interrogated Lord Andover, while Mr. Barker, Mr. Spencer and Mr. Russell stood in anxiety waiting his reply.

“ Your letter,” returned the other, “ brought me to Milford, and hearing that you had been only a few hours gone, I was determined to have, if possible, another interview before we should be more widely separated.”

“ I am truly glad to see you ; and yet I will own a disappointment, for I had hope of your having obtained some intelligence of my Letitia,” replied his lordship.

“ Why I *have* had some *little* account of her,” returned Clifford, “ and that
“ was

“ was an additional inducement for me
“ to——”

“ What account ? ” “ What is it ? ”
“ What account ? ”—they all at once in-
terrogated.

“ Miss Mansfield who came over with
“ my brother and sister, knew her in the
“ West Indies ”—was the answer.

“ *Miss Mansfield.* Heavens ! *But where*
“ *is she now ?* ” asked the earl, with impa-
tience ; upon which Mr. Clifford fixed his
eyes upon his friend and said with an em-
phasis—IN LONDON.

“ IN LONDON !! *Is it possible ! ?* ”—was
a general exclamation.

Clifford replied, “ She is indeed ; and
“ safe and well.”

“ What,” said Lord Andover, “ do we
“ then do here ? Let us be going.”

“ The sooner the better,” said they all ;
and taking a handsome leave of the com-
mander and crew, embarked on board of
the returning cutter.

“ Now,” said the earl, “ we have leisure
 “ for farther information respecting this
 “ blessed event. Not one question would
 “ I allow myself to ask *till we were on our*
 “ *way* to the dear spot which contains all
 “ my ideas of happiness. My Letitia is in
 “ London : safe and well. You have seen
 “ her Frederic !”

“ I have,” he replied.

“ And you are convinced—”

“ —She is all that woman can be,”
 said Clifford, interrupting; explaining, and
 answering his friend with a smile.

“ And is the dear child well and
 “ *happy* ?” asked the father, whose fond-
 ness and anxiety were scarcely exceeded by
 the tenderness and solicitude of even Sey-
 mour himself.

Mr. Clifford gave ample satisfaction on
 those particulars.

“ Miss Mansfield knows her—the Miss
 “ Mansfield of whom I have heard you
 “ speak as being the niece of Mr. Cum-
 “ berland, I presume,” said Mr. Russell.

“ His

“His *adopted* niece: yes, the same,” laconically answered the gentleman.

“You are convinced, Mr. Clifford,” said Mr. Barker jocosely, “that Miss LETITIA *Spencer* is the handsomest woman in England; which is what you are unwilling to allow Seymour to think of Miss Harriet Montague.”

“That she is unsurpassed,” returned he, “I will readily admit; but I think my sister’s friend equals her in every respect.”

“Miss Mansfield do you mean? Can it be possible that two such women exist?” asked his lordship.

“Mind and person united—I really think not,” he answered.

“Why Frederic! you just now said—”

“My dear Andover, you are very dull, at this time, in comprehension, and will not understand me till I, in plain language, tell you that Miss Mansfield; Miss Montague, and Letitia Spencer are one and the same person”—was the
708 reply

reply of Mr. Clifford. This opened a new source of amazement, and gave rise to a conversation in which every one expressed his sense of the superintendence of Providence; his gratitude, and his bright hope of future felicity for the family of the Spencers.

Clifford now more particularly satisfied his friend respecting the health; happiness, and continued affection of his Letitia; giving the most pleasing instances of her tenderness, and solicitude for his return; and it was mutually agreed by all present that the nuptials of her and Lucy should be solemnized with all the celerity of which circumstances would admit, Mr. E. Spencer with fervent expressions of joy, acknowledging the two gentlemen as his sons-in-law.

We are now to suppose the travellers returned to Milford, and thence arrived at Pembroke, where Lord Andover, as soon as he had reached the inn, enquired what carriages could be immediately provided for

for the next stage. Mr. Ruffel, upon hearing what passed, said, that it would be madness for them to think of proceeding further that night; it being then ten o'clock, and not moon-light. But the younger gentleman was in so much haste to pursue his journey that he urged many reasons for their proceeding: not so much on his own account as in consideration of the anxiety which the family must necessarily be under, and which could not, as the post had gone through the town before they reached it, be so speedily removed by any other means.

Mr. Barker and Mr. Spencer seconded Mr. Ruffel's proposal of spending that night at Pembroke, and alledged, what they thought would be of most avail, Clifford's fatigue, who had not slept since he left Chichester palace. But this, that gentleman insisted upon not being admitted as a reason for delay; as he could sleep as well in a carriage as on a bed. He pressed indeed strongly for the continuance of their

B 6

journey,

journey, when Lord Andover asking pardon of his friends for what might be deemed an undue haste, ordered a supper and beds to be instantly made ready. This being done, after a pleasant hour, the gentlemen separated, and all, except Seymour, retired to rest: but he, previous preparation having been made by his servants, threw himself into a chaise, and was driven off with velocity. In the morning, when the gentlemen met at breakfast and inquired for Lord Andover, Mr. Spencer's servant, with whom the secret was entrusted, produced a note which stated, that unable to rest upon English ground till his arrival in London, and unwilling, therefore, to make his friends suffer by his impatience, his Lordship had left Pembroke alone, and hoped to reach the metropolis at least twenty hours sooner than his companions.

This information was received with a general smile of approbation, as his friends had just before expressed their surprise at the lateness of his appearance, and at his
ready

ready acquiescence with the delay of the evening before. But we will leave these gentlemen to pursue their journey at leisure, while we attend upon the lover.

The impatient Seymour stopped only to change chaises, till he reached the end of his journey, at about seven o'clock on the second morning after his departure from Pembroke. He immediately dispatched a note to Mr. George Abington, informing him of the safety of his fellow-travellers and of his own arrival in London, with a request for permission to attend the family to breakfast.

The receipt of this billet in Grosvenor Square, caused the greatest joy. There was now scarcely a wish ungratified and every one looked forward with delight.

Mr. G. Abington returned an answer expressive of the general happiness.

When Letitia was first informed of Seymour's arrival, and of his promised attendance at the breakfast table, she was totally unable to support herself. Her heart fluttered,

tered, and her tremor was so great that it was with difficulty that she was prevented from fainting. But her grandfather congratulated her upon the event in such lively terms as reconciled her to her own emotions, and she began to prepare herself to receive her long regretted lover. Lucy, who assisted in dressing her, said that she was determined to make her appear as handsome as possible, that Lord Andover might think *her sister* still more charming than Harriet Montague: and indeed nothing terreftrial could be imagined more truly beautiful than her appearance at this period. The morning was fine and warm, it being now the first week in May, and the room decorated with basons of flowers; amongst which she sat with a countenance more lovely than the lovely Flora herself; for there was a soft confusion—an enchanting timidity which she vainly endeavored to suppress, that rendered it irresistibly charming. Her dress was a genteel morning robe of fine muslin, and she sat on a sofa
between

between her mother and Lucy, who exerted their power to inspire her with some degree of fortitude. At length a carriage stopped at the door; the bell rang; and soon after the step of a servant coming up stairs, so much increased the perturbation of Letitia, that the throbbing of her heart almost deprived her of the power of breathing, and she rested her head on Mrs. Spencer's shoulder, as the servant entered.

"Lord Andover, madam."

"Show him up."

No more was said till they heard him coming, and, in an instant saw him enter the apartment. As he advanced, the ladies arose from their seats, when Letitia, leaning upon Lucy's arm, by an involuntary motion, half reached out her hand, but instantly dropped it, and was covered with blushes as he approached her, and caught the hand which she was withdrawing.

The moment was tender: it was more; it was awful; rendered so by the perfect silence which reigned in the room, for not

one

one of the four had the power of speaking for some moments. At length Mrs. Spencer said "Letitia, my love, be seated, and let me——"

"Pardon me madam," interrupted the happy Andover, "for being the cause of so much discomposure to your lovely daughter. Yet that I AM the cause, is my glory and felicity:"—seating her upon the sofa as he spoke, and supporting her with his arm while he pressed her hand with his lips.

"My Letitia!—my Harriet!" continued he—"by which dear name shall I address you?—from this blest moment, I hope to date my happiness. From this hour of transport, to hold you to my heart as mine for ever."

"My Lord—Lord Andover"—said she in a trembling voice—"I am—I will not hesitate to say I am indeed——"

She could not add another syllable. He stopped as if to catch her words, but finding that she continued silent, he said,

"Suppress

“ Suppress not an acknowledgment which
“ will, I trust, confirm my felicity. The
“ sound of your voice is harmony to my
“ heart : yet let me request you not to
“ use such *distant* language. Am I not
“ your Seymour—your Henry, as in days
“ of former happiness ! *My* name is the
“ same, though your’s is changed.”

“ Yes,” said Lucy, with vivacity, seeing
her sister greatly affected, “ but your
“ name, you know, must be altered like-
“ wise ; or you cannot possess Spencer
“ Aviary.”

“ The name of Spencer,” he returned,
“ will ever be my glory ; but on my own
“ account, the possession of the Aviary is
“ a more trifling consideration than you
“ seem to imagine ; and to punish you for
“ the idea, I here decree, that when I am
“ dignified with the name of your family,
“ you shall be deprived of that distinction.”

Lucy blushed deeply at this unexpected
reply, and was attempting an answer, when
Mrs. G. Abington entered the room with

Matilda

Matilda and Caroline to say that the gentlemen wanted their breakfast. The party then adjourned to another apartment, where they passed the morning in that state of felicity of which congenial souls will easily form an adequate idea—"where hearts meet hearts reciprocally soft."

Mr. Spencer, who, as has been frequently intimated, was a constant promoter of the amusement, as well as happiness of others, proposed an early dinner for the purpose of making an excursion to Richmond. This was agreeable to every one. Mr. and Mrs. Herbert were summoned to increase the number, and in the most delightful rambles around that beautiful spot, the evening was spent in more than common felicity. About nine o'clock the company returned to Grosvenor-square, where much to their surprise they were received by the gentlemen from Pembroke, whose arrival was not expected till the next morning.

Mrs. Spencer, who was the first that alighted, sprang, the moment she saw him,
into

into the arms of her husband ; and then immediately hastening to Letitia, who had not quitted the carriage, cried, “ Come, “ come my child—come share a father’s “ embrace and receive his blessing.”

“ And is he come !” said the lovely girl, as she ascended the steps. “ What “ now have I to wish for ?”

The scene was again affecting, and every eye was moist. As Letitia arose from her knees, Mr. E. Spencer took the hand of Lord Andover, who had pressed near him, and clasping it with one of his daughter’s between both his own, blessed their intended union. Clifford then led his half reluctant Lucy to share with himself a similar benediction, which was given with equal fervency.

Mr. Ruffel, whose jocular manner enlivened every scene, protested that he thought Letitia Spencer was much handsomer than Harriet Montague, and said, that as a voyage to the West Indies was so improving, he thought it very unfortunate that

that he had been prevented from participating of the benefit.

Miss Spencer received her friend and tutor Mr. Barker, to whom she chiefly was indebted for her education, with affectionate respect, and the Herberts were almost overwhelmed with acknowledgments of obligation.

CHAP. CVII.

Letters : and an Excursion to Rose-Valley.

THE day after the arrival of the gentlemen was so very showery, that, by universal consent, it was entirely spent at home ; and as past events made a subject of conversation, the letters, supposed to be written by Letitia, during her confinement in her apartment at Beverly Lodge, to Seymour and Lucy, were mentioned ; and produced. It was now evident (as she had taken copies which she had preserved and often read over, of what she had written) that great pains, as well as great art, had been used by all the Percivals to sever her from the love of all her friends, and to destroy her happiness and her reputation. Mr. Ruffel was fired with resentment at this recapitulation of the atrocity of the family, and declared his determination of endeavoring

endeavoring to bring them to exemplary punishment. Letitia was now desired to write, as the Lord Chancellor had directed, to Mr. Percival for a sum of money, in such a style as would draw an answer, acknowledging his belief of her existence, without permitting it to appear in what part of the globe she was situated: the following, was the form prescribed.

“ SIR,

“ Having been driven to a situation in
“ which I could neither find friends nor
“ money, you will not be surprised at my
“ requesting from you a supply of the
“ latter. Fifty guineas is all I require at
“ your hands. If you refuse me, Mr.
“ Ruffel will I hope befriend me.

“ Perhaps not recognizing my hand-
“ writing, you may demand an interview
“ to convince you of my existence.

“ It certainly is not my wish to see
“ Beverly at present, but I am now under
“ another's controul, and must obey when.

“ I am

“ I am commanded; therefore when a
 “ visit to Beverly becomes necessary I must
 “ undertake the journey.

“ Please to direct to me by my former
 “ name, to the care of Mr. Thomas Ingram,
 “ Captain of the Swallow West Indiaman,
 “ Thames, London.

“ I am fir, your's with due respect,

“ H. M.”

The effect of this letter evinced the Chancellor's knowledge of mankind. The Percivals were alarmed at the idea of Letitia's application to Mr. Ruffel, and the intimation of her visiting Beverly was an equal subject of apprehension. The gentleman, therefore, with the advice of the Privy Council immediately wrote as follows, addressed to Miss Harriet Montague.

“ MADAM,

“ You need not be under any apprehension of my not recognizing your
 “ hand-writing. I know it well, and am

“ too

“ too certainly convinced of your exist-
“ ence ; so that whether you are still in the
“ West Indies, or whether you are return-
“ ed to England, you need not give your-
“ self the trouble of a visit to Beverly,
“ where your presence cannot possibly
“ afford any pleasure. You must know
“ how very expensive Mr. Russell’s officious
“ interference rendered your education, by
“ which means nearly the whole of the
“ pittance left for your future support by
“ your father, Captain Montague, who
“ was a very inadequate match for my
“ sister, has been expended in that and for
“ your board ; nevertheless, if upon receipt
“ of the money, you will sign proper re-
“ leases, &c. as you are now of age, I will
“ order you the sum of one hundred
“ guineas, and will meet in London any
“ person who shall by you be duly autho-
“ rised to execute the business.

“ Your poor grandmother bids me say
“ that she is ashamed of her past affection
“ for you ; and your aunt — that is to say
“ my

“ my wife, for she boasts of not being
“ allied to you by blood—of her kindness.
“ I however cannot help saying that I am
“ sorry for you ; that your cousin Stephen
“ has some respect for you, and that I wish
“ I had cause to style myself your still
“ more affectionate uncle.

“ RICHARD PERCIVAL.

“ Your cloaths, &c. shall be packed, and
“ directed to any place you think proper
“ to appoint.”

The receipt of this letter, delivered into the hands of Mr. Ruffel by his old acquaintance Captain Ingram, added fuel to his anger, and the Chancellor, without whose approbation nothing was determined upon, insisted on their being disappointed and mortified in the most public manner possible, as the only method likely to prevent their standing a trial. Mrs. G. Abington dropped a tear on her sister's account, and said, that convinced as she was of her deserving every severity, she could not help

feeling for her relation's ensuing punishment. Upon this Mr. Spencer observed that the triumphant carriage of the Percivals was, if possible, more heinous than their delinquency itself, as it evinced the continuance of an impenetrable hardness of disposition that gloried in successful villainy, and delighted to add insult to injury. Could it be done with equal safety, and was there as much probability of its striking conviction, and effecting a subsequent contrition, he should certainly declare in favor of lenient measures : but the truth of the circumstances demanded his acknowledgment that the Chancellor's intention ought, in his opinion, to be executed, both for security to the oppressed, and for future benefit even to the oppressor. It was then agreed that Letitia should not appear in the vicinity of Beverly, till the arrival of the period appointed for Stephen Percival to take possession of Spencer Aviary, now at the distance of about five weeks ; and that in the interim the marriage settlements of both

both Clifford and Lord Andover should be completed, with other deeds necessary to be signed on Letitia's taking possession of Beverly, and previous to her marriage. The change of Lord Andover's name, or rather the addition of Spencer to that of his family, was likewise to be forwarded, that nothing but the nuptial ceremony might remain to be performed when the crisis arrived which should proclaim our heroine Queen of the Village.

The Chancellor of the time—the great Lord had imbibed so strong an affection for Letitia, that he was determined to exert the utmost of his power and abilities to see justice done to her in every particular ; and she therefore requested that the management of the affair might be left entirely to him : a request to which every individual concerned acceded with pleasure.

In arranging the marriage writings of Miss Spencer, it was requisite that Mr. Clifford should be introduced as a party.

Mr. Herbert was likewise requested to be a witness, on which occasion he presented to Mr. Spencer, by the hand of Mr. Ruffel, the securities for ten thousand pounds which had been given to him in trust for Harriet Montague, being the legacy of Mr. Cumberland.

The integrity and generosity of Mr. Herbert received high encomiums from all the family, and Letitia, with the approbation of her friends, signed over the securities to his little Harriet-Rosella—Mr. Spencer, Mr. E. Spencer and Lord Andover joining in magnificent presents to the two eldest children, as an acknowledgment of the unreturnable obligations under which they considered themselves to Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, for the protection and friendship which they had so nobly given to our heroine.

Preliminaries being completely adjusted, excursions into the country were proposed till the period of Letitia's going to Beverly, as the warmth of the season rendered London

don rather disagreeable. The Lord Chancellor claimed a visit to his seat in Surry; where our friends spent several happy days. Mr. Spencer afterwards, attended by Mr. and Mrs. G. Abington, returned to the Aviary, leaving Mr. and Mrs. E. Spencer; their three daughters; Mr. Ruffel; Mr. Clifford; Mr. Barker; Lord Andover, and the Herberts to pursue their intended perambulations.

Miss Abington was very impatient to embrace her niece, as were likewise Mr. and Mrs. Abington to see their granddaughter; but they forbore to indulge their wishes on account of Miss Patty.

Mr. Clifford now requested Mr. E. Spencer to visit his estate in Warwickshire; which that gentleman readily agreeing to do, the company set out for that place on the following day. Here they found themselves so pleasantly situated, that they determined not to remove till the 13th of June, when they were to proceed to Spen-

cer Aviary, according to the plan projected by the Chancellor.

The old family seat in the midst of Mr. Clifford's estate, was one of the most rural habitations in the kingdom, and had once been called magnificent. The surrounding grounds were laid out in a style similar to the building, and afforded many situations that, to minds the least tinged with romance, were absolutely enchanting. It was called Rose-Valley, and well did it deserve that name, for it appeared as if it had been cultivated solely for the purpose of producing that lovely shrub, so numerous were its blossoms in every hedge near the mansion. Arbors and avenues were likewise shaded by roses of various descriptions; mingled with sweet-briars, woodbines and honey-suckles.

It was in this place that Letitia first knew what mortals call real happiness. The time passed since the discovery in which she was so materially concerned, had been almost a tumult of pleasure; affecting interviews

interviews having so quickly succeeded each other, that she had scarcely recovered from a first, ere a second again disordered her serenity. But at Rose-Valley every thing was tranquil; while love and friendship impressed the passing hours with incidents of sweet and deep remembrance.

In the neighbourhood of Mr. Clifford's estate, several gentlemen of respectable characters had country seats, and an agreeable intercourse subsisted between the families around. Clifford had commenced an acquaintance with most of them at his first visit to Rose-valley, and therefore without waiting for ceremonious inquiries, sent an invitation to the gentlemen and ladies in the vicinity, requesting the favor of their presence to a rural breakfast. The invitation was accepted by a number of genteel people of all ages: music was procured from the town of Warwick, and the whole was conducted by Mr. Herbert in a pleasing and romantic taste. Amongst the company assembled upon this occasion, was

a gentleman of the name of Fonnereau, who had taken possession of his estate about a twelvemonth before, upon his coming of age. During a long minority, the entire management of his fortune had been entrusted with his mother; and she had so faithfully discharged her duty, that though his father had left his affairs much perplexed, the young man now received his property (about three thousand pounds per annum) in a perfectly unencumbered state, and with a large sum of money in advance, exclusive of the fortunes of his two sisters, Charlotte and Maria. Mrs. Fonnereau had a handsome jointure from a former husband who had died without children; and with that she had educated her young family in a finished manner. She was indeed a woman of rare accomplishments, and so sweet in her temper, that to see her and love her was the same thing. Her son, whose name was Charles, was a young man of high spirits. He had a good understanding, was extremely genteel, and well disposed.

disposed. But she could not prevail upon him to think of matrimony ; as he had unfortunately imbibed the too fashionable sentiment of “ Love unconfined.” Maria was of her mother’s temper ; gentle and tender ; Charlotte of her brother’s—exuberant in vivacity ; yet of an excellent disposition. This agreeable family lived about a mile from Rose-Valley ; Mrs. Fonnereau, at the earnest request of her son, by whom she was almost adored, continuing the superintendence of affairs.

Our readers of sagacity will readily conjecture that the introduction of this family, at this crisis, portends some event consequential to that of the Spencers. The conjecture is just. In process of time they were connected both by congenial ties, and by legal obligations.

CHAP. CVIII.

A Fête Champêtre.

AT the breakfasting mentioned in the preceding chapter, a dance was proposed in a shaded avenue near the house, at which a Captain Williamson asked and obtained the hand of Matilda Spencer, just as Charles Fonnereau approached to solicit the same favor. He therefore turned to Caroline with evident chagrin and said "Am I
" too late *here* madam? Or will *you* oblige
" me?"

" I might have been asked first," she replied with some degree of archness; " but
" I will accept you to punish you."

He bowed low; muttered something about being happy, and turned to observe Matilda.

Matilda perceived his attention and
blushed,

blushed, but did not then know that she thought him very agreeable.

Clifford danced with Lucy, and Lord Andover led his Letitia, who drew a delightful contrast between this *fête champêtre* and the ball at Mr. Wharton's.

At the end of the first dance, this accomplished couple seated themselves upon a bench beneath the branches of a large lime tree, and entered into a conversation which elevated their minds almost to the felicity of angelic beings : and so absorbed were they by what past within their own breasts, that the second dance was concluded before they recollected that they belonged to the party.

Clifford and Lucy now approached their retirement ; and soon after Caroline drew her partner to the same spot. She was followed by Matilda, who supposed that her *sisters* were the objects of attraction, when in fact Mr. Fonnereau was the magnet that solicited her steps towards the sequestered

C 6

groupe.

groupe. That gentleman in the meanwhile viewed her approach with marked attention, and the imaginary horrors of matrimony vanished as she advanced.

After some time spent in lively conversation the dance was renewed, and at length the entertainment concluded with general satisfaction. When the company retired to their several habitations, the exquisite beauty of Miss Spencer was an universal theme; every individual observing that it was impossible for human imagination to conceive any thing more truly lovely, yet all allowing that her mind and manners exceeded even the elegance of her figure. Mrs. Fonnereau asked her son what he should think of such a wife. His reply was—"Every one must think well of such a woman in every capacity, but I should like her better for a sister. She is too handsome for a wife."

"For a sister! What, you are in love with your partner!" said Charlotte with an

an arch design ; she having perceived his attention to Matilda.

“ You are mistaken madam,” he replied.
“ My partner was too much like yourself.
“ I am not fond of such mad-caps.”

“ Come hither child,” said he to Maria,
“ and receive, as proxy for the object of
“ your brother’s adoration, his vows of con-
“ ficiency—of *everlasting love*. Meekness
“ is his present taste. But Charles—be
“ cautious; do not swear too positively, lest
“ some new face tempt you to perjury.”

All this was spoke in the height of good-humoured facetiousness ; for Charlotte sincerely loved her brother, and wished to see him married. Mrs. Fonnereau smiled at her son’s embarrassiment, as with peculiar pleasure she had observed his apparent partiality for Matilda Spencer, and wished for such an amiable acquisition to her family.

During the residence of the company at Rose-Vailey, several agreeable parties were formed amongst the families in the vicinity ; and these with a rich fund of domestic
amusements,

amusements, occasioned the hours of our friends to pass in high felicity. All malignant passions were expelled the place, and the truest harmony reigned around. In this enviable situation we will leave our excellent party, and return to the village of Beverly.

CHAP. CIX.

Anticipating Conversations.

THE sixteenth of June was now hastily advancing, and preparations for the entrance of the Percivals into the dominions of *Spencer Aviary*, went on with rapidity. Nothing could exceed the premeditated grandeur of the design, for the particulars of which our readers will be pleased to revert to the eighty-eighth chapter in our third volume. The dress of Miss Bullion, now sent home completely finished by the female undertaker of the whole, was more magnificent than the bridal attire of a Sultana. It was a perfect blaze of finery; jewels of various hues dazzling the eyes from every part of it. The attire of Mrs. R. Percival was next in brilliancy, and that of the bridegroom, elect, was superb: indeed

deed the families from both the Lodge and Bullion Bower seemed determined to display the most princely appearance.

Curious were the conversations which occasionally passed between these consequential personages on the approaching crisis, which absorbed all their waking and their sleeping hours; for their very dreams represented shadows of their meditated triumph over people whom they hated for their native superiority.

“Don’t you think madam,” asked Miss Bullion of Mrs. R. Percival, “that Lucy Spencer will be obliged to confess the ornaments for my head exceed every thing she could form an idea of?”

“If she does not *confess it*, my dear,” answered Mrs. R. Percival, “she must be conscious of it; for certainly nothing that ever was in Beverly was so noble and so beautiful.”

“Oh they are divine!” exclaimed the young lady. “These diamonds! These
“ rubies!

“ rubies ! These pearls ! And these *amethysts* ! !—I shall expire with pleasure
“ when I put them on my head !”

“ In which dress do you intend to make
“ your *entrée* ?” asked Mrs. Mitchel.

“ In my gold tissue, to be sure,” replied Miss Bullion ; “ for can I too much honor
“ the day which is so much to honour *us* !
“ and I hope my dear Lord Beverly (I must
“ familiarize myself to the noble sound)
“ will adorn himself as sumptuously as
“ possible.”

“ Not on the day on which I shall take
“ possession of the Aviary,” said the gallant Mr. Stephen, “ but on the day following,
“ which will give me in my lovely Count-
“ tress a prize far superior to the dirty
“ acres.”

“ Stephen judges properly,” observed Mrs. R. Percival. “ It will be sufficient
“ for the first occasion if *I* am in full dress,
“ as *I* must be first admitted into the
“ mansion.”

It was in the midst of one of these anti-
cipating

cipating conversations that the letter from Letitia to Mr. Percival was delivered at the Lodge. The hand-writing was immediately recognised by as many as looked at it; and the information which it gave of her existence, was a source of vexation, to all who were in the secret of her birth. But Miss Bullion protested that she *pitied the young woman*, and declared that she had no objection to take her home; and even to put her into her second woman's place, the first woman's place being already too well filled by Burchell to admit of an offer being made of it.

"I think," said Mrs. Mitchel, with a knowing smiler, "it would be as well to keep the girl at a distance. Are not you madam of my opinion?"

Mrs. R. Percival, to whom the question was addressed, replied with studied indifference, "I do not know madam that it is of much consequence where she is, as I suppose that she must be provided for in some manner, somewhere."

"Then dear, dear sir! do let her come,"
cried

cried Miss Bullion. “ It would give me
“ exquisite pleasure were she to behold our
“ procession. And indeed without she
“ is a witness of it, my triumph will not be
“ completè. Oh ! I should die with de-
“ light to see her packed into some of
“ the last carriages amongst our domestics,
“ and to send her with some insolent mes-
“ sage to the people at the Aviary ! Her
“ beauty would not then, I fancy, be much
“ noticed, for she would look as mean and
“ as poor as she is in reality. He ! he !
“ he ! ”

Thus ran on the tongue of the intended bride ; delighted with an endeavor to render our lovely heroine a subject of ridicule. Her envy and consequent hatred of a girl who dared to be handsome in poverty, was always obvious, and she had often made her future mortification a subject of pleasant contemplation.

Mrs. R. Percival joined with Miss Bullion in exulting at the spectacle of Harriet Montague in a state of humble dependence,
and

and vowed that she should be perfectly delighted to have her in their train. But when alone with her husband and her mother-in-law, Mrs. R. Percival declared that she had rather see a dozen hobgoblins in their ghostly habiliments than behold the figure of Letitia Spencer. The honorable trio agreeing in the same sentiments, the letter of which we have before given a copy, was immediately written by Mr. Percival.

Miss Percival and Miss Deborah loudly inveighed against *the girl's assurance* in having the least idea of appearing in the neighbourhood; the first supposing that she meant to excite the pity of Lord Andover for her frailties; the second, averring that no pity was due to a wretch, who could ensnare to his destruction such a man as Captain Millemont, who, *she well knew*, would not have thought of *her*, had she not laid traps to decoy him.

Stephen said that they were too hard upon his cousin Harriet, who, it ought to be

be considered was poor and destitute, and therefore had a right to indulgence. This remark respecting her poverty was an intended gratification to his dear Rebecca, who held no merit equal to that of being rich ; no reproach so great as that of poverty. She therefore gave an approving smile and said, “ You distinguish well Percival. “ Such wretches *have* some claim to be “ pitied by *us*.”

Robert, whose malevolence never suffered him to gratify any one, remarked, that so handsome a woman never need be poor, and that he should not wonder to see her one day ride in her own carriage. This brought them all upon him at once, when George, who had stood at a window as if not hearing their conversation, turned round, and taking him by the hand, said, “ Well observed Bob. You never uttered “ a sentence that pleased me better.”

“ Will you always be an enemy to your “ own family George ?” asked his mother in a reproaching accent.

“ No

“ No madam,” he replied, “ I wish well
“ to every individual of it, and amongst
“ the rest to my cousin Harriet, whom,
“ upon my word, you do not seem to re-
“ gard as belonging to us. Is she not the
“ child of my father’s sister ? And ought
“ she not therefore to be——”

“ Well George, no more of this now.
“ Your cousin Harriet will be taken care
“ of, depend upon it, though it is not
“ necessary that she should return to the
“ Lodge,” was the reply of old Mrs. Percival.

“ Perhaps,” said Robert, with the grin
of an incendiary, “ brother George would
“ wish her to be still more nearly related
“ to our family.”

“ I should be proud of such a wife Robert, but I love her so well that I would
“ rather see her Countess of Andover,”
returned the generous youth.

“ You are getting into an impertinent
“ conversation young men,” said the father
with

with sternness ; “ therefore I desire you to
“ chuse some other subject of discourse.”

Robert looked fullen ; and George walk-
ed out of the room.

Mrs. Mitchel, with much expreffion in
her manner, said to Mrs. R. Percival,
“ Mr. Robert has suggested an idea that
“ might be attended with no disagreeable
“ consequences. If George were to marry
“ Miss Montague, *her claims would be ab-*
“ *forbed* by the family.”

“ Claims ! Claims to what ?” said the
indignant Miss Bullion, whose consequence
felt a severe shock at the idea of calling
Letitia sister. “ Claims to a sum that
“ would scarcely find me with pins for a
“ twelvemonth ! A pretty consistency, for
“ one brother to ally himself to a woman
“ with fifty times the fortune of a foreign
“ princess, and another to marry a *beg-*
“ *gar !*”

Mrs. Mitchel who was extremely offend-
ed with the manner of the nabob's daughter,
made a very cool but sarcastic reply about
the

the danger of *being too secure*, and she thus confirmed Mrs. R. Percival's idea of her knowing more than she wished her to know. Alarmed therefore at the gathering warmth between the ladies, she employed all her cunning to turn the matter to a jest. But her success in the attempt was very imperfect, for the pique on both sides was strong and evident. After the company separated, Mrs. R. Percival expressed her conviction to her mother and son of Mrs. Mitchel's being acquainted with the secret of the family : and it soon appeared by Stephen's account of what had passed between him and that lady upon the visit of Mr. Montague, by what means and to what extent she had obtained her information. Mrs. R. Percival was now half wild with vexation. To be under fear of Mrs. Mitchel, was *intolerable* : a woman whom she had hitherto maintained in a subordinate situation ! it was not to be borne with patience ! And now she fancied that she recollected some late instances of her assumption

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tion which had never before occurred to her. What could she do? Nothing; for it was impossible to make the artful woman unbelieve: and she could only continue her civilities. For the first time in her life did Mrs. R. Percival attend to the suggestion of one of her sons marrying the legal heiress of Spencer Aviary. It would certainly be a secure method of proceeding. Yet she soon rejected it with scorn. Should the girl, for whom she had imbibed the most inveterate hatred, be so well provided for; and call her mother? No. Should either Robert or George sacrifice their prospect of allying themselves to riches, by marrying a creature who was, and who deserved to be, entirely destitute! No indeed! For upon consideration, where was the danger! Mrs. Mitchel must be secret upon her own account; for where could she live so genteelly! She might, it was true, hope to be rewarded for making a discovery. But where was the *proof* of the fact? Not with Mrs. Mitchel. Mrs. R. Percival therefore

determined to be easy and rest upon the wisdom of the lady for not hazarding a certainty for a contingency ; and she settled a plan of conduct respecting this menial, which would show a growing friendship, without either confirming or contradicting the reality of the fact in question, as she did not suppose that Mrs. Mitchel would venture at any explanatory conversation.

About this period *another* incident happened which was inimical to the views of this all-grasping family.

When Mr. Spencer was first the possessor of the Aviary, the benefices within his patronage were almost all filled with elderly people, who had died before his knowledge of Mr. Barker, a circumstance which had put it out of the good man's power to provide in the manner that he wished for the interests of his young friend. The rectory of Beverly was the best living in Mr. Spencer's gift, and of this, he much wished to see Mr. Barker possessed ; while the Percivals hoped that it would not be vacant till
it

it was theirs to bestow ; as in this case they had promised to present it to the son of Mrs. Quaintly, who had always been one of their creatures. But their design was disappointed by the unexpected death of Mr. Forrester, who though he had not reached the age of sixty, had possessed the rectory of Beverly upwards of thirty years. When the news of this gentleman's decease came to the Percivals, Mrs. Quaintly, who almost lived in the family, was ready to question the justice of Divine Providence, which, she said, had been much more devoutly worshipped by her son, than by that unholy man Barker, who it was not to be doubted would be fixed in the goodly heritage, but *she* was not to be turned from the righteousness of her ways. It should still be *her* custom to hail upon her knees the rising and the setting sun, and to pray at morning, noon, and evening tide. Thus vauntingly did this hypocrite talk of her religious habits, while her heart was the seat of guile.

The Percivals, who were greatly chagrined by the event, which, it was known, would fix Mr. Barker in the envied benefice, endeavored to comfort Mrs. Quaintly by assuring her that her son should have the next vacant living in the patronage. But with tears streaming from her eyes, she declared that nothing could console her for the loss of *dear Beverly rectory*; the possession of which would have set her above all the parish, except the possessors of the *Aviary*. Leaving her to the mortification which she merited, let us observe that Mr. Spencer sent an express to Mr. Barker upon the information of the death of Mr. Forrester, and that our estimable friend was inducted into the benefice in a very short time, to the complete satisfaction of every individual in the parish, except the Percivals and their parasites.

By this event Mr. Barker became possessed of eight-hundred a year, and immediately resigned two small livings which he had before received from Mr. Spencer.

These

These were bestowed by this benevolent man upon the youngest son of a numerous family in the neighbourhood. The benefices in question were of such a description as to be tenable with that of Beverly, but the new rector disdained the monopoly. He was one of the too few of his species whose piety was genuine, and who was consequently noble and disinterested.

Mr. Barker had long since conceived a tender attachment to Miss Abington, who was not insensible either to his affection or to his merit. But she had no wish to leave the single life, and he was actuated by too high a sense of honor to be sedulous in increasing her partiality, while his finances were insufficient to render her situation equal to that in which she had been educated. He now, however, gave way to his wishes, and secured the approbation of all the lady's friends for his intention of endeavoring to prevail upon her to favor his addresses.

The delicacy of Miss Abington's sentiments arose from purity of mind. For many years after the death of the gentleman to whom she was to have been united, she was firm in her rejection of every offer. But the high estimation in which Mr. Barker was held by those most dear to her, and the real friendship which for a length of time she herself had entertained for him, rendered her unable, when he avowed a still dearer attachment, to give an immediate refusal to his pleadings. She promised to *consider*; and this consideration, aided by the persuasions of her friends, so powerfully spoke in favor of the gentleman, that in the space of a few days Mrs. George Abington was impowered to give him a favorable decision. And now leaving all affairs in a proper train, we will bid a short adieu to Spencer Aviary and return to the Lodge.

The ninth of June is now arrived, and in seven days the family hope to be in possession of all their wishes. Every article of
finery

finery is in the most perfect readiness, and they have nothing left to do but to sit and talk of the approaching period. Miss Bullock was continually at the Lodge, where she was treated as a petty queen. Even Mrs. Mitchel, who still remembered her insolent manner, deemed it politic to behave to her with politeness, till she should have more proof of the circumstances which she had drawn from Mr. Stephen; for it was her continual business to consider how she might best turn the secret to her own advantage. At length she determined to keep the affair in her own breast till the Percivals were in possession of Beverly; believing that she should then be better rewarded for her silence by them, than by the Spencers for her information; though in either way she considered the knowledge which she had gained as her certain fortune.

Mrs. Quaintly advised that Mr. Stephen should take possession, on the anniversary of his birth, and receive the fair hand of

Miss Bullion on the day following; but Mr. Percival observed, that to prevent any premature proceeding, and that the claim might be complete, they had determined that the birth-day should be celebrated at the Lodge; that they would make their *entrée* on the second, and on the third, solemnize the nuptials. To this, however, the young lady suggested an objection; alledging, that it would be very improper for her to make one in the procession except as the bride of the lord of the place, and protested that she would not go to Spencer Aviary till her nuptial day. In this resolution she was supported by the artful Mrs. Mitchel, who commended Miss Bullion for her delicacy; and the young lady was so pleased by the support, that she declared Mrs. Mitchel ought to settle the whole plan, and vowed she should have the tuition of all her children.

This was Mrs. Mitchel's ultimatum, and it sealed her secrecy. In a very few words, the arrangements were now finally settled, and

and the Bishop of the Diocese, who, in consideration of some services rendered to one of his sons in the East Indies, by Mr. Bullion, had promised to perform his daughter's wedding ceremony, returned an answer to the letter of invitation that he would not fail to be at Beverly on the 16th of June.

Miss Martha Abington had been earnestly requested by her dear friend Mrs. R. Percival to make one in their triumphal procession, but she begged to be excused, as she said that it would be an open insult to such of her own family as were interested in the event, whose hearts she well knew were heavy at the idea of leaving the Aviary, however much they might affect indifference. But as she would not appear with the *other* party, she had determined to make a visit to a family in Colchester, where she had been long expected, and in consequence, left Beverly a few days before Letitia's return, to the entire satisfaction of all her relations, who were perplexed how to act with respect to her, in the important affair before them.

CHAP. CX.

A Vision of the Night.

WE will now convey from Rose-Valley the party of friends who had passed so many days of felicity in that rural situation, taking with us in our way through London, the Bishop of Chichester; his lady, and the Lord Chancellor, all of whom arrived at Spencer Aviary about ten o'clock in the evening, on the Friday preceding the birth-day of Mr. Stephen Percival, which was on the Monday, and were joyfully received by Mr. Spencer; Mr. and Mrs. Abington; Mr. and Mrs. George Abington; Miss Abington, and Mr. Barker: and there seemed to be but one heart in the company.

Mr. Spencer once expressed his wish, in which Mrs. G. Abington and Letitia particularly joined, that a previous and private explanation

explanation could take place with the Percivals. But the Chancellor evinced the strong expediency of a public confronting, and remarked, that a tedious and expensive law-suit, which would probably be the result of any other mode of proceeding, would deepen the obloquy from which they were desirous to rescue the offenders. He reminded them of the venality of the people in whose breasts the proofs of Miss Spencer's identity were lodged, and observed, that though there could not remain a doubt respecting the issue of such a trial, it would involve the family in a very unpleasant perplexity for an uncertain length of time; whereas the manner in which he purposed to proceed, would drive the opposite party to an evident, though tacit confession of their guilt.

The cogency of his lordship's reasoning could not be opposed, and Mrs. G. Abington only asked if he thought that it would be possible for the Percivals to determine upon a contest after being made acquainted

with the evidence which had been secured. To this the truly great lawyer replied—
“ Would you, my good lady, have ima-
“ gined or believed that they could have
“ acted so atrociously, or, in some points,
“ so absurdly as they have done, had not
“ the facts been established beyond con-
“ troversy? If by private remonstrance
“ they should be urged to acknowledge
“ their past criminal proceedings, and
“ make a consequent relinquishment of
“ their claims, could the circumstance
“ be hidden from the world! Certainly
“ not. By a law-suit they cannot lose
“ more, and *may gain something*: they may
“ gain partizans; which to them would
“ doubtless be consolatory. By the me-
“ thod for which I contend, every voice
“ must acknowledge our title, as their con-
“ fusion must avow its reality, and the
“ probable effect of a sudden and open
“ attack will be their flight from a vici-
“ nity in which they could no longer re-
“ main with honor. And who could wish
“ their

“ their continuance in this country ? Cer-
“ tainly no one who wishes well to this
“ family, or to them ; for here, their foot-
“ steps must leave the mark of infamy. I
“ admire, madam, your delicacy and your
“ tenderness, but your good sense must
“ admit that no lenient measures can with
“ safety be used.”

Mrs. George Abington submitted, and the rest of the company, who likewise wished for gentle methods, acquiesced with the Chancellor’s determination. His Lordship then informed them that he had engaged Mr. Montague’s attendance at Beverly, with the landlady from Wapping, on Monday evening ; at which time also he expected the family of Samuel Taylor, and the clerk who had gone with Webster to carry the letter to Mr. Percival.

The next morning all the inhabitants of Spencer Aviary, except Letitia, shewed themselves in the village : but Letitia was not to be seen by any one till the Percivals should appear at the gates ; and that no
idea

idea of her should be raised at the Lodge; the strictest secrecy relative to every thing in which she was concerned, was enjoined to the attendants.

When the report of the Chancellor's arrival reached the ears of the Percivals, they were considerably alarmed, though they knew not upon what account.

“ His coming at this crisis was extremely strange !”

“ What business could *he* have at the Aviary !”

“ It was not known that he had any particular acquaintance with the family !”

“ Yet what could he do, were he even to go there upon business !”

“ He could not overturn a legal right—as such he must believe theirs to be !”

“ Why then vex themselves !”

“ Pshaw ! it was ridiculous to be disturbed about a matter of no conse-

“ quence ! Old Spencer was a particular old fellow, and it was doubtless his whim

“ to have the Chancellor present at his
“ relinquishing

“relinquishing the property. That was
“all.”

Thus did people, with diseased consciences, both torture, and endeavor to quiet their minds with “trifles light as
“air; which to the jealous, confirmations
“are, as strong as Holy Writ.”

The Bishop of Chichester, it was well known, was formerly an intimate acquaintance of the venerable possessor of the Aviary, yet even *his* visit, at such a period caused a wonder. Indeed every thing that occurred was of moment. A cloud passing over the sun, or that luminary shining in noon-tide brightness, were incidents of notice, and boded good or evil.

When Mrs. R. Percival went to bed on the night succeeding the appearance of the company at the Aviary, she could not, for several hours, close her eye-lids. Hope and apprehension so divided her heart that she was tortured by the contest. At length, for a short time, the realities which surrounded her gave way to the fancies of
vision,

vision, and after many imaginary difficulties, she was approaching the Aviary—that sum of all her wishes—in a triumphal car, which was carried through the air by flying serpents. For a moment, every thing appeared in gay and glowing colors, when a dark substance arose before her and impeded her approach to the mansion. It soon swelled to the height of an enormous mountain, on the top of which, arrayed in snowy robes, sat several smiling cherubs, but when they looked on her, they frowned, and pointed to a form below. Instantly she saw a man, whom by his robes she knew to be the Chancellor, who holding in one hand a whip of scorpions, struck her across the eyes and the prospect vanished from her sight, at which she gave a scream, and awoke.

The terrors of the vision were so great, that Mrs. Percival was obliged to summon some assistance; and it was a considerable time before she regained any degree of composure.

On

On the Sunday, both the families met at the Parish Church, when the Bishop, at Mr. Barker's request, instructed the congregation. The text from which he gave an admirable discourse, was, "For He knoweth the secrets of your hearts," and without any particular design, said so much which the Percivals applied to themselves, that an universal gloom was spread over their countenances, and they peevishly decried both the preacher and his doctrine.

The day at the Aviary was spent in a manner very different: Every face wore the sun-shine of internal satisfaction, and every one enjoyed the happiness visible in the others.

On the Monday morning all the forms requisite to establish the lovely Letitia Spencer in her just possession of the Aviary and its domains, were gone through with the utmost accuracy: and with the highest gladness she was saluted queen of the place by every individual present. When these forms were dispatched, she reverentially approached

approached her great grandfather, and with inimitable grace re-delivered to him the deed of relinquishment which he had just signed, and entreated him to make her situation a happy one by considering himself, till his latest hour, the sole possessor of the whole estate. The equanimity which Mr. Spencer endeavored to preserve, was not proof against this conduct. Taking the hand of his lovely descendant in a kind of transport, he led her to Lord Andover, saying, "Thus my child, and thus only, can I reward your abundant merit"—giving to the Earl, whose eyes glistened with delight, the hand which he held.

The happy Seymour bent his knee while he pressed to his lips the inestimable boon, and said, "I did not think any circumstance could possibly have enhanced the value I ever set upon this prize; but precious as is the gift, it appears to me to receive additional worth from the giver."

Every

Every one was charmed by this address of the young nobleman to the good veteran, who was so greatly loved and revered by every heart.

The remainder of the morning was spent in rambles through the enchanting enclosures, and more open pleasure-grounds which were dispersed in the extensive park surrounding the mansion of Spencer Aviary, by a set of individuals as happy as the most raised imagination can conceive. Letitia and Lucy walked arm in arm; and earnest in conversation, soon found themselves at some little distance from the rest of the company: when indulging their mutual wishes for retirement, they insensibly wandered into the grove appropriated to the accommodation of the tuneful race, which communicated its name to the mansion and the estate. Here they seated themselves in a leafy alcove, while little birds of various descriptions, rendered perfectly tame by familiar treatment, hopped upon the grass before them, and appeared to render homage
to

to their new mistress, by exerting their harmonious powers as they moved around.

“How happy, my dear Letitia,” said Lucy, “do you make us all! Even these beautiful choristers seem to acknowledge you as their queen, for surely never before did they fill the air with such grateful melody! But for you, what a day of sorrow would this have been to us all!”

“But for *me* my Lucy!” replied Miss Spencer. “Oh! how little do I merit such an acknowledgment from any one! For what am I in myself! If joy and gratitude arise in any heart, they only can have one direction. One Source gives all our felicity. One Great Object claims all our thanks. A few weeks back, who was more destitute than I! Pain me not therefore, my dear sister, by saying *but for me!*”

“Your superior way of thinking,” answered Lucy, “I ever acknowledged with sincere delight. It is my pride that I owe much to your friendly correction.

Even

“ Even in the present instance, your re-
“ proof is necessary ; for though I *do* endea-
“ vor to raise my heart to the First Great
“ Cause, who can give blessings under
“ various forms, yet your existence is so
“ dear to me, that without you, there
“ scarcely appears to me a possibility of
“ happiness. But I will try, I think,”
added she smiling, “ to love you less.”

“ No my Lucy,” said our heroine, “ ne-
“ ver let me live to experience any abate-
“ ment of the affection I so dearly prize.
“ Let me be secure of the second place in
“ my sister’s heart. The first I resign to
“ Clifford.”

“ A hint for me to give way to Sey-
“ mour,” said Lucy ; “ but I almost grudge
“ him the pre-eminence, and yet he de-
“ serves it ; for sure he stands unrivalled
“ in excellencies !”

“ Well may you blush Lucy,” said Le-
titia, blushing herself, “ at the insincerity
“ of that exclamation. I will not deny my
“ sense of his merits, though I do not
“ allow

“ allow his being unequalled. How has
“ he whom I now see through yonder
“ glade deserved such a declaration ?”

Lucy’s eye, following that of her sister, discovered Clifford at a distance. Her blush was deepened, and reclining her head on Letitia’s shoulder, she said in a gentle accent—“ I will not disown my being
“ happy in his affection, nor my thinking
“ that he merits my highest esteem. But
“ he turns this way. I am almost sorry he
“ is coming, for my heart is so softened by
“ the happiness of the day, that he will
“ see more of the tenderness of my temper
“ than I wish should be visible.”

“ But why my Lucy veil yourself to such
“ a man as that ?”—was her sister’s question as the subject of their conversation approached their retirement.

“ Lovely sisters ! Amiable pair of friends !
“ Say Miss Spencer—had you rather remain uninterrupted ? Inviting as is the
“ situation, I will return if my intrusion is
“ unwished,”

“unwished,”—was Clifford’s address as he advanced.

“Make room sister,” said Letitia, “or I will give Mr. Clifford my seat.”

“If I am permitted to stay,” said he, as Lucy moved, “I will sit here”—throwing himself upon the verdant turf at their feet. “The picture is too beautiful to be disturbed.”

A conversation now ensued in which every one expressed a sense of the highest felicity, and Lucy did indeed discover a more than usual degree of tenderness. The hand of Clifford, in which he held one of her’s, was moistened by a tear that dropped from her eye when she acknowledged the greatness of her happiness. Just then Lord Andover, who had been seeking for his friend and was told by his servant he had walked towards the Aviary, entered the rotunda from a side avenue. Upon seeing the happy groupe, he stopped, not knowing, as he afterwards told them, whether to contemplate or to add to the party.

For

For some moments he stood unperceived, but Lucy lifting up her head saw him and exclaimed—"Now, now, we want"—nothing more—she would have said, but conscious of the construction which her exclamation must admit, she dropped her eyes and met those of Frederic, who with sincere delight was observing her emotion, but fearful of embarrassing her, instantly averted his looks. Seymour now advanced and seated himself by the side of Clifford, when the conversation was renewed with increased felicity, and till the dinner bell summoned them to join the rest of their friends, they thought not of departing from the grove, where every thing desirable, on this side of Heaven, seemed to centre.

Can any of our perusers form an idea of more supreme earthly bliss than that which filled the hearts of the four amiable beings above mentioned ! The most exalted opinion and the highest glow of fervency conspired to create the purest love.—Love, which Angels might acknowledge and man
delight

delight in.—Love, in its genuine sense ; such as the beneficent Creator of the Universe implanted in the soul of mortals, to soften the cares of life and sweeten its bitters : to give in this foretaste of Heaven, a desire for its fuller delights. What but love can harmonize the rough mind of man ! What but love, dignify that of woman ! To this it gives consequence ; to that, conciliation : and to both a desire of doing acts worthy of the approbation of the object of affection.

But think not, ye simple boys and girls, that the fever of your spirits, to which the name of love has unthinkingly been given, deserves the glorious appellation : nor believe ye fordid and ambitious, that the intemperate pursuit of the riches and honors annexed to the object ye are desirous to secure, has a whit better title to the noble epithet of affection. A love of person, creates the first ; a love of self, the second ; but genuine affection can only be produced in a breast capable of admiring every thing

truly amiable, and of loving, with sincerity, every thing really virtuous.

Love—pure love, as we just now intimated, teaches men virtue; and we likewise affirm that virtue teaches men to love; for how can the heart where virtue presides, be insensible to the charms of an agreeable form which virtue actuates! To suffer imaginary wisdom or fancied consequence to suppress this noblest of the human passions, is to endeavor to rise superior to the designs of the Great Creator—to be wiser than even GOD himself. Men and women are doubtless fit companions for each other. If not—WHO IS CHARGEABLE WITH THE INEQUALITY?

Let pedants answer fairly to this question.

Education, it may be alledged, debases the female sex, and renders it too trifling for the serious conversation of men of understanding. Where then does the fault of *education* rest? If man is really a superior being, why does he not govern his family according to his wisdom, and command

mand that his daughters receive such instructions as will qualify them to act the important part for which they are designed by nature? But if that part of education which teaches our girls the airs and graces of a fine lady be contemptible in the eye of the sages of the other sex, how much more deserving of ridicule is a young gentleman of seventeen at the dancing school, with his feet in the stocks!—instructed in nothing but in the art of making himself *agreeable to the ladies!* Is this one of the sex that looks down from a fancied elevated stand in nature, upon the world of females in general! Can a little subsequent instruction in Latin and Greek, added to two or three years residence within the walls of a college, render the mighty man of so much consequence as to hold in disdain those species of beings which *his Creator* called into existence and pronounced to be *his meet companions!!* Nothing but conceit or arrogance, or invulnerable stupidity can dare to assert that women were

created as unworthy objects of man's affection. We do not contend for that equality of capacity which some celebrated heroines have written to assert. No; men have advantages which women are denied, and women abilities which men can never attain: so differently and so wisely has the Great Creator of both, endowed the sexes, that they might be useful as well as agreeable companions, or—in other words, *meet helps*—to each other.

Strength of body, and perhaps of mind, appertains in general, to the masculine race of beings; but then beauty of person and fineness of understanding is as generally monopolized by the females. Probably the pre-eminence contended for by the first, arose originally from their superiority in muscular strength. Be that as it may, it would puzzle even a Woolstonecraft to find the smallest pretext for the *superiority* of *women*; equality being all that ever was contended for by the strongest female partizan.

CHAP. CXI.

The Sixteenth of June.

THE dinner bell summoned from more than arcadian happiness, Lord Andover; Mr. Clifford, and the two lovely sisters, who at the skirts of the grove encountered Miss Abington and Mr. Barker, whose milder felicity would have been as conspicuous to an observer, as that which glowed with higher radiance in the countenances of the more juvenile couples. A smile of complacency from all around, expressed the pleasure which the unexpected meeting occasioned, and the happiness of each individual was heightened by a consideration of that which the others experienced.

Soon after dinner was ended, Lord Andover was summoned to a servant who had arrived express from London. His busi-

ness was to deliver some writings which his lordship, at Miss Spencer's desire, had ordered to be expedited. The Chancellor was then requested to assist, and Letitia in his presence executed the deed, which Lord Andover witnessed, the purport of which was, to empower her father to charge the Aviary estate with thirty thousand pounds for his younger children. When this was delivered to Mr. E. Spencer, he folded his daughter to his heart and kissed her in the fondest manner, but spoke not, for he was too much affected to use language. The family in general received the communication in the same manner, and Letitia was so oppressed with their acknowledgments, that she was obliged to retire to her own apartment, and make perfect silence, respecting what she called the indispensable circumstance, a condition of her return to company: that condition agreed to, she appeared at the tea-table.

Nothing could be more perfect than the harmony which reigned amongst this select company.

company. Convivial and congenial, they enjoyed the truest happiness experienced by the sons and daughters of mortality. Mr. Spencer the Good—for that was the epithet which he truly deserved—seemed to be carried back to the period of youth, and he spoke on the blessings which were showered upon them with a liveliness and energy that gave additional warmth to the hearts of his hearers. The chancellor, who was more celebrated for *strength*, than *gentleness*, of mind, said—“ My dear Sir, you
“ soften me beyond my nature, at the same
“ time that you make me sensible of more
“ than common dignity of soul.”

The bishop said—“ Mr. Spencer never
“ speaks, but he elevates my ideas. The
“ next world has always such an immediate connection in his eye, with this,
“ that whenever he talks, I seem advancing
“ in my way to Heaven, without the least
“ sense of either distance or difficulty
“ between.”

“ Thank GOD,” said Mr. Edward

“ Spencer, “ that he has been spared to
“ us till this period ; for unspeakable as is
“ the joy which we experience in finding
“ our beloved child, it would have receiv-
“ ed great abatement had his presence and
“ participation been wanting.”

“ To have been made a mean of happi-
“ ness to any of my friends must ever
“ have afforded me the highest delight
“ I could receive on this side Heaven,”
replied Letitia, with a crimsoned cheek ;
“ but that my grandfather Spencer lives
“ to partake of the satisfaction which the
“ recent change of circumstances has given
“ to his family, every one present will al-
“ low me to say is the consideration which
“ most particularly heightens my pleasure
“ and my gratitude.”

“ Forbear my children” said the vener-
able parent, “ thus to affect me. You
“ make me sensible of weaknesses I wish to
“ guard against. The prospect around me
“ is such, that, did not the infirmities of
“ my body remind me of my age, it might
“ allure

“ allure my view through many future
“ years of terrestrial enjoyment. But
“ thanks to that beneficent Being who
“ has so kindly ordained an increasing
“ imbecillity to weaken our love of this
“ world’s pleasures and to draw our wishes
“ to that in which we are promised a re-
“ newal of youth and strength which shall
“ never know decay. I only look forward
“ to a removal from these happy scenes ;
“ for I think that I have nothing now to
“ do but to die. What more can I be
“ blessed with in this sublunary state ?
“ What indeed is there left me even to
“ wish for ? To expect a pure and cloud-
“ less sky within this troubled vortex, is
“ inconsistent with the nature of our situ-
“ ation. Light and shade form the beauty
“ of our prospects. It is only in a higher
“ region that eternal sunshine gilds the day.
“ At present, indeed, all around us appears
“ serene. The only cloud that intervenes,
“ is the darkened mind of my grand-
“ daughter Eleanor, and even that will I

“ hope in time be purified. Her mor-
“ tification must unavoidably be great,
“ and I trust her contrition will succeed.
“ Let us therefore look forward, no-
“ thing doubting, with joy and gratitude;
“ prepared to receive the unpleasant as
“ well as the pleasant incidents of life;
“ the first being proofs, equally with the
“ last, of Heavenly care and kindness.
“ The less we are attached to this life, the
“ less occasion is there for us to be visited
“ by misfortune, as the more we are wed-
“ ded to its pleasures, the greater is the
“ necessity for Him, who watches for our
“ welfare, to strew afflictions in our paths,
“ that we may withdraw our hearts from
“ transitory happiness. In my former life
“ I have often been sensible of the efficacy
“ of sorrow. At this period, joy appears
“ to usurp its office, for every additional
“ felicity which I experience, seems more
“ and more to expand my heart towards
“ a still better inheritance, and to add fer-
“ vor to my wishes for that state where no
“ ideas.

“ ideas of separation shall shade our happiness.”

While the good man continued speaking the most perfect silence marked the attention of every auditor, and when he ceased, they for some moments forbore to reply, lest they should interrupt what he might farther intend to say. But, when they perceived that he had ended, they broke into the warmest expressions of love and reverence; every one saying something which evinced peculiar satisfaction that the discovery had been permitted to take place before his translation to brighter Regions—to Regions of more pure felicity.

In the cool of the evening, the company amused themselves in the gardens, till upon the arrival of some carriages they returned into the house, where they found those people whom the chancellor had summoned to Beverly to aid his design upon the Percivals. Soon after their arrival, the servants were all ordered to appear in the great hall, where they were properly informed of

the circumstances of the time, and received orders how to conduct themselves on the ensuing morning.

A general joy animated every breast, upon being presented to their young lady and old master, and they congratulated each other with tears of gladness upon the prospect of their still living together: so united were all the branches of this truly arcadian family, from the highest to the lowest.

CHAP. CXII.

We will now attend the busy Family at the Lodge; reverting to the Period of Mrs. R. Percival's being so much affected by a Vision of the Night.

WHEN she arose in the morning, she found herself so very unwell, that, Mr. Percival judging it expedient to send for a physician, Doctor Wilfred was summoned, who pronounced a hurry of spirits to be the occasion of the lady's indisposition, and recommended repose: but repose at the present crisis, could not possibly be experienced. Her soul was in commotion, and all that the Doctor could prevail upon her to do, was to lose a small quantity of blood; for notwithstanding that it was Sunday, she had much important business to transact relative to the ensuing days.

Late as it was, the debate respecting
the

the propriety of inviting *the people of the Aviary and Shrubbery* [that was their irreverent expression], to either of the festivals, had not yet been concluded. They had previously announced with all due form, “ *that Mr. Stephen Percival, the true incontestible, just and lawful heir, in right of his mother, of all the estates belonging to the late Humphrey Charlton, Esq. would, on Tuesday the seventeenth of June, being the day after that which would complete his title to the estates above mentioned, make his entry into the mansion of Spencer Aviary, there to abide for the remainder of his natural life, &c. &c.*” but no intimation had been given that the birth-day would be celebrated with splendor. Stephen judged it proper to invite their relations; as the omission must be termed a breach of that apparent cordiality which had for some time past subsisted between the families.

The cordiality Mr. Percival said, had been so much interrupted by their impertinent

tinent interference in Seymour's affairs, that he could not think it requisite to take any notice of them on the ensuing occasion; and as an invitation had not before been given, he thought it would be absurd to invite them at that period.

That no notice should be taken of the people—was therefore determined upon.

Mr. Murray and Mr. Tomkins, two professors of the law were now announced; after which, several hours were spent by the gentlemen in perusing and executing deeds and settlements; by the ladies, in trying their various new dresses for the two grand days. Mr. Bullion, who with his wife, had arrived at the Lodge on the evening before, was all bustle and importance. “*His Becca was one of the richest heiresses, and would soon be one of the first women in the three kingdoms.*” Ben-
“*Bullion was no pauper!*” “*Let HIM*
“*alone for producing the chink!*” He
“*would count guineas with any Duke in*
“*the Nation.*” “*Had toiled h—ll—shly*
“*hard.*

*“ hard for what he had got !” “ The poor
“ black d—v—ls used to stare and howl
“ most cursedly when they saw him approach—
“ ing !”*

With such infamous boasting of rapine, and probably of murder, did this monied monster endeavour to impress a sense of his consequence, while Stephen Percival paid the most adulating attention to every sentence. Mrs. Bullion was not of equal importance amongst the ladies, for Miss treated her mama with so much indignity that it degraded her in the opinion of other people.

The morning of the sixteenth of June, now dawning upon the Percivals, is ushered in, by the ringing of all the bells in the vicinity. The Lodge is crowded with company, and the family receives the most flattering compliments of congratulation on the joyful occasion. Throughout the day, nothing is heard but sounds of festivity, and a most sumptuous entertainment is partaken of by all who accepted the invitation.

invitation. The anxiety of Mrs. R. Percival is almost subsided. She begins to feel herself secure; though she cannot forbear frequently to breathe her fervent wish for the close of the ensuing day.

Miss Bullion was perfectly elated with her prospect; yet even *she* wished for the arrival of the period which was to secure beyond a possibility of disappointment, her terrestrial felicity.

Old Mrs. Percival smiled a smile of venom. She gloried in the success of her schemes, and laughed at Providence, while she expressed her concurrence with Mrs. Quaintly's assertion, that it was Heaven's design that the descendants of Mrs. R. Percival should enjoy *the goodly heritage*.

The brow of Mr. Percival seemed darkened by care. He tried to express a sense of joy, but the appearance would not fit upon his features, though his mother, like Lady Macbeth, reproached him with cowardice. To her he replied that he had as much confidence in their prospects as she had.

had ; and as much happiness ; but that he thought a *manly* expression of his satisfaction more becoming his time of life, than the gaiety suitable only to youthfulness. Notwithstanding this assertion, the heart of Mr. Percival was sad : not from the least degree of compunction, but from a cause by him unfathomable.

Musical dancing, and various other species of entertainment, employed the family and the company. Wine was distributed in such ample quantities, that very few in the house retired to their beds in perfect sobriety. Even the ladies, exceeding their usual allowance, were sensible of increased hilarity from its effects. But as scenes like these are uncongenial with our purity, and disgusting to our favorite perusers, we will convey them to the rising of the sun on the day ensuing ; the transactions of which, claim a chapter to themselves.

CHAP. CXIII.

Virtue and Vice in Relievo.

NOT an intervening cloud was seen in the sky on the morning of the impatiently-expected seventeenth of June. Even the winds seemed to conspire to render the day delightful; the western breeze alone playing in the air, which otherwise the beams of the midsummer sun would have warmed to an unpleasant degree.

The festivity of the preceding day was no way comparable to that of this great epoch in our history which the present chapter is intended to commemorate; for now the whole country for several miles round, seemed to be in agitation. All the tenants from the great to the small, were summoned to swell the procession of the Percivals to Spencer Aviary, and every family in the country pressed to increase
the

the train of the triumphing party. Many that were invited were too dependent upon the Lords of Beverly to refuse the invitation : their attachment to their revered patron, who then inhabited the mansion, would otherwise have prevented their compliance ; and scarcely any who appeared in the cavalcade went merely as a friend.

Our readers will again revert to the 88th chapter of our labors, if they wish to refresh their ideas of the projected entrance, which underwent very little alteration from the original design.

The prelate who was to perform the nuptial ceremony, arrived at Beverly on the evening before, and all the rest of the company appeared there in time to partake of a breakfast, which would have done honor to the gardens of an English Ambassador in a foreign country.

After the repast, the carriages and bands of music were ordered to be in readiness : the *horse and foot*, were likewise summoned to

to their stations, that all might move at the same moment.

In the first coach, drawn by six very beautiful cream coloured horses with black manes and tails, harnessed in the most superb manner, sat Mrs. R. Percival; Miss Bullion; Mr. Stephen and the reverend bishop; the ladies now dressed with the utmost magnificence imagination can portray, and the bridegroom-elect no less sumptuously apparelled.

In the second coach was Mr. Percival and his mother, with Mrs. Bullion.

The third conveyed the two young ladies, with Robert and George; the latter grieving at being obliged to attend upon an occasion which he feared would give pain to many friends whom he most sincerely valued.

Mrs. Mitchel and Mrs. Quaintly, who was considered as one of the family, occupied the fourth, accompanied by the son of the lady last mentioned (he being appointed domestic chaplain to the intended

new

new household) and one of the lawyers; the other being dispatched as a herald to announce the approach of the imaginary heir and his retinue.

The following carriages were filled with the invited gentlemen and ladies, attended by a long train of servants in the gayest liveries; the people on foot and musicians, as had been pre-determined, keeping pace with the horses, which moved slowly forward. Besides these, a great many smart young gentlemen (amongst whom were several officers mounted upon prancing horses) rode at random, and created an agreeable confusion. The herald was preceded by two servants blowing french horns, and before the first carriage, were several musicians with various instruments.

The ribband for favors, cockades, and streamers, was of a bright orange-color.

The order of their alighting was settled with much solemnity, and it was decreed that immediately after the form of taking possession had been legally gone through,
the

the fair and yielding hand of Miss Rebecca Bullion was, by his Reverend Lordship, to be secured to Mr. Stephen Percival for ever.

We will now leave the procession to move at leisure and attend to what passed at Spencer Aviary.

Very different from the tumultuous expectations which agitated the Percivals, were the sensations which filled the breasts of the inhabitants of this peaceful dwelling on their awaking from their quiet and healthful sleep. Not destitute perhaps of anxiety respecting the events of the ensuing day; they were perfectly free from that boisterous joy or pain which tears the bosom of deliberate guilt when it is successful, or when it fails.

The family at the Aviary arose in the morning at an early hour, to receive some company which the Chancellor desired might be invited to witness the conduct of the Percivals, on the appearance of Miss Spencer. Amongst several others, was Mr.
Lewis,

Lewis, the fellow-captive of Mr. G. Abington; with whom (though we have not lately had occasion to mention him) that gentleman held a constant and most friendly intercourse. Mr. Lewis was accompanied by his lady and a beautiful daughter about the age of thirteen. A Mr. Kelby, likewise, an eminent gentleman of the law, with his two sons, arrived at the same time, and upon the same account; and very unexpectedly, though not unwelcomely, Mr. Fonnereau, the admirer of Matilda Spencer, from Bankfield in Warwickshire, drove his phaeton up to the portico. The company was seated at breakfast when a servant delivered Mr. Fonnereau's compliments, upon which the cheek of Matilda was suffused with crimson, but as nobody appeared to notice her confusion, she recovered herself so far as to be able to receive his address with a tolerable grace, though not without his gathering hope from her embarrassment.

Sir Horace and lady Fortescue; the earl and countess of Belmont, with their son

son Lord Blandford, an accomplished young nobleman, and several others of respectable character, added to the company.

The ringing of bells had long been heard from every quarter, and the sound of martial music, at a distance, was now very distinguishable; upon which the Chancellor expressed his wish to have breakfast finished as soon as convenient, that every thing might be properly arranged before the arrival of the expected party. His wish was instantly complied with. Every one was soon ready to be disposed of according to his direction.

The buildings at Spencer Aviary were surrounded, at some distance from the house, by a sunk-fence, of an irregular figure, over which were thrown, in divers directions, several bridges; some conspicuous, others hardly to be seen at ten yards distance. Just without the gates of the principal one which fronted the grand entrance, had been spread the evening before, a very large tent of green silk, the curtains

of which could in an instant, be drawn up into festoons. Within this tent all the company, Mr. Spencer and Mrs. G. Abington (who had retired to their apartments) excepted, were seated by order of the Chancellor; and were requested to pay attention to what should pass on the arrival of the approaching invaders.

Letitia, who had endeavored to exert all her fortitude, and who had, till this period, appeared composed and collected, was now overpowered by the arduous circumstances of the moment, and fell lifeless into the arms of Lord Blandford and Mr. Clifford, between whom she was sitting. Lord Andover, apprehensive of this effect of the morning's business, had for some time watched her countenance, and seeing her fall, sprang to her and assisted in leading her into the more open air, where she soon recovered. Then making apologies for the bustle which she had occasioned (for everybody was alarmed,) she hoped she said that she should now go through the task allotted to her, though

though she wished that her presence had not been deemed requisite ; but as she was told it could not be dispensed with, she had submitted to the painful necessity, and was sorry the strength of her mind was insufficient for the occasion.

The lovely Letitia never appeared more beautiful than at this moment. She was deeply affected at being obliged to distress the most inveterate of her enemies ; who had not only endeavored to deprive her of her birth-right, but to plunge her amongst the most infamous and wretched of her sex ; and would willingly, had it been permitted, have compromised the business, and pardoned all their crimes against her :—an inclination to forgive which those who “ love
“ justice more than mercy,” will deem an unpardonable weakness. It was a weakness however which we so truly venerate, that we consider it as one of the brightest traits in the disposition of our heroine, composed as that was, of the purest—of the most angelic qualities. Yet she did not

make an ostentatious display of her clemency. She did not officiously talk of her feelings: on the contrary—knowing the necessity of the proceeding, she endeavored to suppress her sense of its severity till the tenderness of her nature subdued her fortitude.

The herald, preceded by his two musicians, now appeared at the porter's lodge, and was, in a few minutes at the upper gates. The Chancellor, professionally habited, advanced to receive him, when with studied solemnity he said in an audible voice—" My Lord ! for I understand I am
" speaking to the Chancellor of England,
" I come in the name of Stephen Percival
" Esq. the only true and lawful heir of
" these domains, to demand free and un-
" controuled entrance into the mansion of
" Spencer Aviary, for himself; his friends,
" and his servants, that he may there live
" and dwell for evermore, according to
" the last will and testament of his great,
" great

“ great grandfather, Humphry Charlton
“ Esq. late lord of all Beverly.”

“ Let him come to me,” said his lordship abruptly, in answer to this pompous speech : “ and do you fir take notice of the
“ reception which he will meet.”

The lawyer was considerably surprised at both the words and manner of the Chancellor, and well knowing his great abilities, and that he would not act without due consideration and authority, he began to suspect something might be amiss on the part of his clients, he therefore determined to be attentive to what was passing, and a little cautious in the business, that he might not take the wrong side of the question.

At this instant the cavalcade entered the park, when his lordship advancing to the tent desired the company to be in readiness, saying to Miss Spencer—“ You must now,
“ my dear child, recollect you are doing
“ your duty to GOD; to your friends;
“ your country; yourself, and posterity.
“ Nothing less than the conduct which

“ you are requested to observe can avert
“ calamities to your family; save your ene-
“ mies from utter ruin and disgrace, and
“ prevent the last hours of your great
“ grandfather from being scenes of trouble
“ and distress.”

“ O! sir,” replied Letitia, “ what in-
“ citing motives do you lay before me! I
“ trust I shall have strength to do what
“ you and my other friends require.”

As the first coach approached the gates, surrounded by music and servants, the Chancellor left the tent and walked towards the procession. The doors of the carriages, now all drawn up, were instantly opened, and Mrs. R. Percival; Miss Bullion; Mr. Stephen, and the Bishop alighted and were advancing to the gates, when the great law-lord, assuming an air of true importance, walked up to the young gentleman and said in a firm tone,

“ Mr. Stephen Percival, I presume.”

“ The same sir,” replied Mr. Stephen, bowing low.

“ And

“ And I am his mother my lord,” said the impatient lady ; “ come hither, as you have doubtless been informed, to take possession of our lawful right and inheritance.”

“ By what authority madam ?” asked the Chancellor.

“ By what authority sir ! By the authority of my great grandfather Charlton’s will. My son Stephen, in right of his mother is the owner of the Beverly estate,” replied Mrs. Percival with a fluttering heart.

“ Are you madam sure of that ?” asked his lordship : then without waiting for an answer, called to the servants, who had been previously directed, to pull the cords ; upon which the curtains of the tent were instantly drawn up and the whole company discovered.

Mrs. R. Percival, who by this time was surrounded by her friends, stood in amazement ; when the Chancellor stepping back, took the hand of Letitia, while his lordship

of Chichester, supported her on the other side, the rest of the company (Taylor and his wife in the front) following her in due order, and said,

“ MISS LETITIA SPENCER, THE ELDEST
“ GREAT GRAND CHILD OF THE LATE MR.
“ CHARLTON, GIVES ME AUTHORITY TO
“ BID WELCOME TO THE MANSION OF
“ SPENCER AVIARY, ALL THE FRIENDS OF
“ HER FAMILY. IF YOU, MADAM, ARE OF
“ THAT NUMBER—” He was proceeding
with much solemnity in his voice and manner, when a shocking scream, something like a groan, from the lady he addressed, interrupted him.

When she first saw the lovely object of her treachery, she stood transfixed. When the nurse; her husband; Captain Montague, and Mrs. Carter advanced, and the Chancellor presented MISS LETITIA SPENCER—she heard no more: horror seized her soul. The whole design stood confessed and overwhelmed her senses, till the violence of her inward commotions prevailing,

ng, she gave the scream above-mentioned, and fell, in strong convulsions, into the arms of her son, whose countenance was paler, if possible, than that of death itself.

The scene which succeeded was too horrid to be regularly portrayed, were our powers of description equal to the attempt. The whole park was in confusion, as the delegates of the Chancellor performed their mission, by giving the company from the Lodge a proper explanation of the cause of the disorder. Mr. Percival with a menacing air approaching his lordship, in violent invectives, accused him with the murder of his wife; and indeed it was almost apprehended that she had left the scene forever. Our great lawyer stood perfectly tranquil and in an elevated tone, said—

“ *Did I speak daggers,*” sir? Words
“ were my only weapons. Your own
“ friends can witness what *they* were.”

This enraged him to almost madness, while his mother darted through the crowd like a perfect fury. Letitia was terrified,

and earnestly entreated permission and assistance to withdraw. But she was desired not to go farther than the tent, and to this she was conducted by her mother and Lord Andover, who used every method to calm and soothe her mind, which was exquisitely pained by the spectacle of the distress occasioned by her presence. Had her own happiness indeed been alone in the question, she would readily and gladly have relieved this distress by almost any means in her power: and she now seriously regretted the consent which she had given to appear before Mrs. R. Percival in this sudden and public manner. But as it was now too late to suspend any of the proceedings, she could only compassionate the present sufferings of her former persecutors; and feel for those, who had never felt for her.

In the mean time the confusion in the park became general. While Mrs. R. Percival was supported on a chair that had been carried from the tent, and methods used to recover her from a strong convul-

five

five fit, which rendered it impossible to seat her in the coach, Miss Bullion seemed petrified with astonishment. She could not, for some time, comprehend the meaning of the bustle, but when she was made acquainted with the truth of the circumstances, her surprise was converted into rage, and she uttered the most violent and indecent language. In vain did her father and mother, who were themselves sufficiently chagrined, endeavor to pacify her by urging that "they were on the right side of the hedge;" that the engagement was now null and void, and she at liberty to make another choice, &c. Nothing could calm the torrent of her passion: her pride, not her love (for Mr. Stephen Percival, abstracted from circumstances, was to her an object of absolute indifference) was humbled to the dust. Instead of being the very first personage in the vicinity, she was, and might long remain, only Miss Bullion, "daughter to people of *no consequence*." This was her disrespectful language of those

to whom she owed her origin. At length wearied with abusing the authors of her disgrace, she hurried to her father's coach and ordering him and her mother to get in, *immediately* commanded the postillions to drive *as fast as possible* to Bullion Bower; where we will leave her to a disappointment rendered absolutely intolerable by the consideration of the happiness of that girl—that despised *Harriet Montague*—that girl; who of all girls in the world she detested for her beauty and presumption, and who was now in a situation so greatly superior to her own. At first, so great was her rage against the Percivals *for daring to deceive* HER, that this source of mortification was almost unheeded: but when it was attended to, it was more than she could endure. The consequences were a fit; a fever, and for some time, a delirium.

Miss Percival; Miss Deborah; Robert, and George, experienced various emotions upon being informed of the outlines of the story. The two young ladies hated Letitia with

with inveteracy, both for her beauty and her conquests over hearts which they themselves wished to secure : and her advancement would in itself have been a subject of lamentation ; and particularly, in the present case, to Miss Percival, as the presence of Lord Andover (whom she still retained some hope to conquer when she should have had the increased consequence of residing at Spencer Aviary) left no doubt of their ensuing union. These considerations added to the disgrace of their family, overwhelmed them with shame and sorrow.

Robert spoke not one syllable. Something like a sullen satisfaction arose in his breast at the disappointment of his brother, who, on account of his seniority, had for some time past been an object of his envy : yet ashamed of the disgraceful business, he took a horse from one of the servants and rode back to the Lodge. George, in whose younger breast every generous and every noble passion dwelt, fled the scene from different motives. He likewise took one
of

of his father's horses, but instead of returning home, rode post to Cambridge; being determined never more to reside with his family.

When Mrs. Mitchel saw the assemblage in the tent, and distinguished Letitia, she instantly conceived the cause of the succeeding confusion, and said, in a manner which evinced her having had some previous knowledge of the circumstances—
“Curfed fate! What a fiend is here con-
“jured up at this crisis!”

Mr. William Kelby, who was one of the gentlemen deputed by the Chancellor to disseminate the particulars of the story in a proper manner, was just behind her when she spoke, and being aware of the advantage her confession would afford to the cause of truth, said “I find, madam, I need
“not inform *you* of the cause of this con-
“fusion: you are already acquainted with
“the affair.”

“O! yes, I have known—Sir! who are
“you pray! What reason have you to
“suppose

“suppose I was privy—I do not understand you Sir”—was the unguarded reply which an involuntary desire of being thought knowing, and a recollection of consequences, drew from Mrs. Mitchel.

“Dear madam! of what efficacy is your caution now! Situated as you have been, it is not *much* to be wondered at that you thought yourself obliged to keep the secret,” said the gentleman who was afterwards an honor to the Bar.

“No, Sir, I have not been *obliged* to keep the secret,” returned the governess, whose affronted pride distanced her prudence, “for I discovered it myself by mere accident. I was not entrusted.”

“You however *are* acquainted with the circumstances, madam; and you did not think it proper to reveal them,” replied Mr. Kelby.

“It was not till very lately, sir, that I knew the affair perfectly; and I have balanced in my mind what, protected as I have been by the family at the Lodge, recititude

“ rectitude required me to do in the business. I will assure you I have been prompted to make the discovery,” again returned Mrs. Mitchel, midway between pride and prudence.

Mr. Edmund Kelby had been some time near his brother, who had given him a sign to listen to the lady, and when she finished her last speech he said, “ Brother, you will remember this lady’s words.” Then turning to her—“ We are greatly indebted to you madam. You will not refuse to repeat what you have now said when called upon in a proper place and manner.” In saying which he bowed and left her in the highest astonishment and perplexity. Mrs. Quaintly who was near, begged her to explain what was going forward; blessing herself and declaring that she knew not what to think; but protesting that if Heaven took the part of the ungodly there would be no living in the world with safety.

The Bishops of Chichester and of the Diocese

Diocese now met, when the first said to the other, " Brother, I am sorry to see you
" under any engagements to the party
" with which you came hither. Are you
" so circumstanced as to be obliged to re-
" turn to the Lodge?"

" Certainly not," replied the other.
" If, as there seems reason to apprehend,
" the family has acted with duplicity, I
" shall not think it right to countenance
" their conduct by my company."

A few words of explanation settled the business between these clerical lords. The Prelate of Chichester proposed to the other to go to the Aviary, and said that he thought his influence, properly exerted, might induce the Percivals to submit to the necessity of yielding to the cause of rectitude, without making themselves still more notorious by determining upon litigation. This was immediately agreed to, and the two reverend gentlemen went and mixed with Mr. Spencer's company.

The efforts to recover Mrs. Percival
from

from her fit, were long unsuccessful. At length however she opened her eyes, and not seeing Letitia, she exclaimed—"And is she gone? Or have I been in a causeless terror? Was she never here. Tell me, tell what has been—" at that moment her eyes caught sight of nurse Taylor, and she said with her teeth shut—"O thou execrable wretch! Thou infernal monster! All this is owing to thee, thou diabolical"——

"Indeed, madam," said the woman interrupting her, "it was not any longer in my power to hide"——

"Peace thou wretch! thou perjured wretch!" exclaimed the almost frantic Mrs. R. Percival, in a raised tone of voice. "How often hast thou sworn—what dreadful imprecations used—that death itself should not lead thee to reveal"——

"Mother! mother! what do you mean" interrupted Mr. Stephen. "To whom do you speak? And what are you talking about?"

"What

“What do you mean Eleanor?” asked Mr. Percival, following his son’s hint. “You have been taken ill, and had better return to the Lodge, if you are not able to proceed.”

“*Return!*” said old Mrs. Percival in a fury nothing short of madness. RETURN! “But yes, we *will* return, and come back again, to the confusion of all opposers”—“darting a look of dire malignity at the Chancellor, who, with Mr. Kelby, stood making proper observations on what was passing.

“Who madam opposes your now proceeding?” asked his lordship. “The path is free;” standing back and waving his hand toward the gates. “The friends of virtue will always be welcome at Spencer Aviary. You cannot say that you are prohibited an entrance. On the contrary, I repeat an invitation in Miss Spencer’s name to as many of the company here assembled as will favor her with their presence,”

The

The Chancellor spoke in so audible a voice, that he was clearly heard by the whole circle, every one having crowded up towards the gates, to learn the full particulars of the disastrous event. This invitation increased the ire of the Percivals; and rage was so predominant that they could not, for some moments, make any reply: till at length Mr. Stephen, whose smooth policy had not, even on this trying occasion, entirely deserted him, said that as he perceived his mother was too ill to go into company; he thought it would be proper to convey her home, after which he would return to the Aviary to investigate the cause of the unaccountable bustle which had taken place.

“ Fool! Poltroon! Coward!” exclaimed his grandmother with added fury, from a despair which the idea of a return created; “ What, quit the premises!” “ Give way to the insolent threatenings of wretches whom you ought to crush under your feet! You merit ejection; and are no longer of my blood.”

“ What

“What madam would you have me do?” mildly asked Mr. Stephen. “Ought not my mother to be my first care? Let me see her in safety, and I will return to execute any commands you may think it right to lay upon me.”

The cold policy of this young man struck the Chancellor with amazement, while the artfulness of his language and the power which he had of disguising his sentiments rendered him an object of detestation. Without noticing his speech, he addressed Mrs. Percival by saying—“What threatenings madam have been made use of to you, or any of your family? And what is the ejection that you mention?”

“D—mn—tion!—” returned the enraged female veteran through her closed teeth, clinching her hand, which trembled as she held it in a menacing position, while her small red eyes seemed to dart malignant fire: “*D—mn—tion!!*”—she could

could say no more, for her son, whose countenance was of a deadly white and whose quivering lips shewed his inward agitation, had commanded the coachman to draw near, and summoning his mother and Mr. Stephen to attend his wife, who was then supported by her daughters and Mrs. Mitchel, they lifted her into the coach and hastening after her, as if glad to be secure from human ken, were driven off with velocity. After their departure, Mrs. Mitchel deemed it proper to order another carriage to attend upon her; and with the two young ladies and Mrs. Quaintly, followed the first to the Lodge.

The Chancellor now moved that the friends of Spencer Aviary should adjourn to the house, and that those who had attended the Percivals to the Park, should be left to dispose of themselves as they pleased. This was a very awkward circumstance to all who had gone thither in expectation of a jubilee; but there was no alternative; they
were

were obliged to return without notice, as it would have been an insult of which the Spencers were incapable, to have given a general entertainment at that period. This was intimated amongst the crowd by the servants, and no one could blame the proceeding.

CHAP. CXIV.

We may pity while we condemn.

THE remainder of the day was spent by the inhabitants of Beverly Lodge in furious contention and mutual reproaches. Every one accused another of having acted improperly, and nothing could be agreed upon relative to future proceedings. We will therefore leave them to their own counsels, with permission to any of our readers who may wish to continue in such company, to exercise the full extent of a gloomy, rageful, or malicious imagination, in portraying all the disagreeable circumstances upon which they may delight to dwell. We shall only intimate
to

to this class of our readers that their fancies will hardly be sufficiently inventive to form ideas adequate of the darkness and horror which reigned in the minds of the principals of that now distracted family ; from which we are heartily glad to make our escape.

CHAP. CXV.

A String of Comparisons.

AS a damp and bleak November atmosphere is to a lovely morning in the smiling month of May:—as a lost path in a drizzling rain on an extensive common, in a winter's evening is to a comfortable feat by the side of a good fire, in a well-lighted room, and amidst a number of social friends:—as the horrors of a howling tempest, in the dead hour of a dark night, on board of a leaky ship, in the centre of the Atlantic, is to the gentle rustling of leaves in a sequestered grove, during the scorching hours of a summer's fun—so was the scene at Beverly Lodge compared to that which gladdened the heart at Spencer Aviary. The dismalness of the first, we left to the gloomy imagination of our gloomy perusers; the brightness of the last can
only

only be depicted by minds which bear a resemblance to those of beings who, freed from the shackles of mortality, employ their powers to the glory of their Creator, by a sedulous endeavor to promote the good of their terrestrial brethren. Pure, calm, unanxious happiness pervaded every breast, from the venerable master and the lovely mistress to the lowest of their servants. Noisy expressions of gladness were forbidden on account of the fallen situation of one branch of the family. They would not appear to triumph over their enemies, for it would have added to their joy could they have hailed them as friends. Instead of the music which it was intended should resound through the apartments, the most interesting conversations were enjoyed by different parties, and in the place of dancing—agreeable walks through grounds that could justly vie with all that Arcadia ever boasted.

CHAP. CXVI.

*Justice and Mercy are ever most lovely when
they walk Hand in Hand.*

ON the Wednesday morning, the Lord Chancellor wrote and sent to Mr. Percival the following letter.

“ SIR,

“ After the measures which, at my ear-
 “ nest solicitation, the family at Spencer
 “ Aviary allowed me to pursue yesterday,
 “ you may perhaps apprehend some still
 “ more disagreeable consequences to suc-
 “ ceed : and I will acknowledge that were
 “ my ideas to be followed, such apprehen-
 “ sions might be realized, as to protect
 “ innocence and to punish guilt, ought to
 “ be equally the endeavor of every man in
 “ my

“ my situation. But Miss Letitia Spencer
“ so ardently joins with the rest of her
“ family in entreating me to be lenient,
“ that contrary to my intentions I write to
“ relieve you by telling you that we do
“ not meditate vengeance for the past and
“ may even pardon it, on an assurance of
“ your proper contrition. Some farther
“ account must be settled with Mr. Mon-
“ tague, who is doubtless entitled to the
“ fortune, both principal and interest,
“ which was left by his brother the cap-
“ tain. A part of this, you very prudently
“ paid him, to prevent his farther inter-
“ ference and enquiries; and you obtained
“ from him, in consequence, a full release.
“ But as Mr. Russel was a trustee for
“ *Harriet Montague*, whose death Mrs.
“ Carter, your late sister’s servant, can
“ bring witnesses to affirm in a Court of
“ Justice, he cannot reconcile it to his
“ ideas of rectitude that any of the effects,
“ or their produce, should be kept from
“ the right heir. If you chuse to make

“any demand for the board and education
 “of *Miss Letitia Spencer*, you will send
 “your account to me: or if you wish to
 “have farther information of our proofs
 “of her identity, the letters which you,
 “your lady, your mother and son have
 “written to Samuel Taylor and his wife,
 “together with some which were received
 “by Mrs. Percival senior, during her at-
 “tendance upon your deceased sister and
 “her child, *from Beverly Lodge*, and which
 “were found at Hilton after her depar-
 “ture, will, I presume, be deemed amply
 “sufficient. If these proofs however should
 “be regarded by you as insufficient, we
 “can furnish many more equally forcible:
 “I mention these particulars that you
 “may judge what will be the best method
 “of procedure on your own account; for
 “to us, benevolence out of the question,
 “it is a matter of indifference upon what
 “course you may determine.

“T”

The

The reception of this letter at the Lodge more than revived their first acute distress:—it created torments not before experienced. Unwilling to suppose that their prospects were blasted beyond recovery, they had cherished a hope that Taylor and his family might still be secured to their interest by the offers which they were determined to make to them. It was then the intention of the Percivals to send their instruments to America, and there to settle them in a manner that should not leave them a wish to return. But when the great delinquents knew that their letters (which according to their particular and positive injunctions, were to have been destroyed as soon as perused) were in the hands of those whom they termed their enemies, and when it occurred that could the voices or the persons of the witnesses be secured, it was probable “*that cunning d.-v.-l of a Chancellor*”—a phrase of Mrs. Mitchel’s—had taken care to secure their depositions in all due form, the hopes of

the Lodge vanished into air, and no opening appeared in the dark cloud by which they were enveloped.

“*Curse upon their forgiveness!*” said the enraged Mrs. R. Percival, in a shower of impenitent tears. “Of what avail is that, when all my prospects are forever blasted!!!”

“Everlasting curses seize their hearts!” exclaimed the shocking veteran-mother, in the tone of Tisiphone herself. “May a sudden destruction fall upon the whole family!!”

Mr. Percival seemed to be inwardly gnawed by his own dire sensations. He spoke but little, but what he did say was expressive of a mind replete with horror. He seemed almost like a person in a state of melancholy madness.

The young ladies were constantly drowned in tears. All their fairy schemes were vanished, and their place supplied by uncertain and uncomfortable prospects.

Robert had scarce uttered one syllable since

since his return to the Lodge ; and the most fullen deportment marked all his actions.

Stephen was the only one who affected endurance. With a mind as deeply chagrined as that of any individual in the family, he determined to put on an air of tranquillity ; intending to clear his own fame, at the expence of that of his father, mother and grandmother ; and believing that if he could effect their removal from the country, he should be left master of the Lodge. In this situation he doubted not to prevail with Miss Bullion to give him her hand and fortune, notwithstanding his loss of the estate ; his vanity leading him to form the erroneous supposition of her having imbibed an affection for his person, independent of any external circumstances. But when, by its being discovered that he was privy to the atrocious transaction, he found that he must necessarily share the disgrace in which his family was involved ; and became sensible that no persons of any

G 5

distinction,

distinction, or indeed of any reputation, would chuse to form an alliance with him, his selfish hopes gave way ; his ruling passion, avarice, had experienced a mortal wound ; and a gloomy despondence superseded his affected tranquillity. He here upbraided the mismanagement of his parental friends in terms of the bitterest acrimony ; accused them of having ruined both his prospects of prosperity and his principles ; censured their conduct in the whole affair, from its rise to its termination, alledged, that if they had pursued the dictates of rectitude, they would have been satisfied with what GOD had bestowed upon them ; and that with this they might all have lived in honor and happiness.

This from a young man whose atrocity had always been obvious to those who saw him undisguised, was an insult not to be endured. The family was now in an uproar, and it was some time before the storm was sufficiently subsided to permit a consultation respecting the answer which must necessarily

necessarily be given to the letter of the Chancellor.

Mr. Murray, the lawyer who had appeared as herald on the day of the intended entrance, lived at the distance of about two miles from Beverly, and usually transacted the business of Mr. Percival in the country: he was therefore summoned to attend at the Lodge upon this occasion, with all possible expedition. When he arrived, Mr. Percival, though he was well acquainted with the flexibility of Murray's principles, felt great reluctance upon opening a business, the investigation of which must necessarily give a blow to his importance. However, the urgency of the case leaving no alternative, he assumed a resolute air; took from his pocket the Chancellor's letter, and put it into the hands of Mr. Murray, saying, "Read *that* sir, and then let us consider what step must be taken in consequence."

Mr. Murray bowed and obeyed, with a solemn visage, while Mr. Percival sat ob-

erving his countenance with attention. But he read nothing there : the features of the lawyer never betrayed the sentiments of his heart. When Murray had finished reading, he returned the letter to his employer, saying, " Have you, sir, answered " this extraordinary address ? "

" No sir," was the laconic reply.

" It is, my good sir, a difficult case to " advise in," observed the man of the law; " but if you are determined upon com- " mencing hostilities, we must be well pro- " vided with ammunition, for we shall " have in this Chancellor, *an intrepid ad- " versary.*"

Murray spoke this with energy. He had no inclination to attend a Court of Justice in a cause which he was convinced must be a bad one, when the great lawyer would appear at the head of the other party. Having had a narrow escape from a toss over the bar, he was willing to save the shattered remains of his reputation for less hazardous pieces of roguery, and where he

might

might fleece his client with impunity. After a great many *pros* and *cons*, it was at length agreed that Mr. Murray should wait upon the family at the Aviary and hear their proposals. But as it would tire our readers to dwell upon the steps by which the Percivals descended, we will briefly say that finding every thing clearly against them, and their case absolutely desperate, they at length determined to leave the country, if Mr. Edward Spencer would purchase the Lodge-estates at a certain offered price. To this he readily acceded, and unwilling to raise difficulties, or to heighten even merited distress, he undertook also to satisfy all the proper demands of Mr. Montague, as Letitia had been the cause, though the injured one, of his having been so long detained from his legal property, which had in part been expended for her board and education.

After this, Mr. Percival, through the medium of Mr. Murray, proposed the sale of his Lincolnshire estate to Lord Andover.

This

This was likewise immediately accepted, so desirous was the family at the Aviary to facilitate the plans of removal which Mr. Percival had formed; it being impossible for him to continue in his situation with honor.

During the arrangement of these preliminaries, Mr. Stephen Percival made private overtures to Miss Bullion; setting forth the sincerity and ardency of his affection, and the happiness which they should experience when united; varnishing over the recent circumstances, till nothing important remained visible. But the young lady was not, as she said, to be *cajoled* out of a fortune worthy the acceptance of a Prince. Instead of shewing any symptoms of partiality, she did not even attempt to soften her refusal, but informed him that she thought his pretension was an indignity, and that her father had just received offers which she intended to accept, from the son of a nobleman; for which reason she

he considered the dissolution of their treaty as a fortunate circumstance.

Stephen, who always disliked her person and had a contempt for her understanding, experienced no concern for what he termed her insolence, farther than as it was a disappointment to his pride and avarice. Giving up, therefore, all ideas of her fortune, he agreed with his father in the plan of going over to America, there to establish his family under an assumed name. This project was at length universally adopted, and preparations were accordingly made for a speedy removal.

Mr. Percival now sent an order for George to leave Cambridge immediately, and to repair to Beverly. The youth, lamenting the situation of his family, obeyed; and fortunately for him, met Mr. Barker at a small town about seven miles from the Lodge. When he saw his tutor, George was greatly abashed, but the worthy Divine soon consoled him by proper arguments, and informing him of his father's intention
to

to quit the kingdom, which had been communicated by Murray, asked him if he should think of accompanying his family. This intelligence was entirely new to the young man, who had neither written to, nor heard any thing from Beverly, since he left it : but he instantly determined on not going with those, who, though connected with him by blood, were so separated from him by sentiment, as to render any perfect union with them impossible.

Mr. Barker asked George if his resolution was unalterable.

George said it was.

“ Then,” replied the first, “ suppress all anxiety for your future circumstances, if you dare to depend upon me.”

The youth burst into tears : upon which Mr. Barker continued—“ I do not wonder, my good young man, at seeing you thus affected. The situation of your family is distressing. At this time I will be concise. When you leave the Lodge, return to Cambridge. I will write to
“ your

“your tutor at College to supply all your necessities, till it shall be proper for other steps to be taken.”

George went to his father, who proposed his going to America. The youth respectfully, but steadily declined it ; upon which he was very sternly treated, and asked how he would support himself.

“ You have given me, sir,” he replied, “ an education for which I thank you, and of which I should be utterly unworthy if I could not, by exerting my resolution, turn it to an account sufficient for my maintenance.”

A great deal of altercation passed between the father and the son on the subject in question, and though the latter preserved the greatest respect both in his words and manner, he received a dismissal from the family with a bank note of fifty pounds, as the last sum which he must ever expect from that quarter.

George, whose heart was widely different from that of any of the name of Percival,

val, was greatly affected upon this occasion. But the little sympathy which he found amongst his kindred, fixed his now almost wavering resolution, and returned him to Cambridge, though with a mind heavily oppressed.

CHAP. CXVII.

Mr. Spencer's Letter to Mrs. R. Percival.

DEEDS for the conveyance of Mr. Percival's estates and effects (for Mr. Edward Spencer agreed to take the moveables upon appraisement) were all drawn, signed and executed as speedily as possible, and the family were preparing, as privately as circumstances would allow, for their last journey upon English territory, when Mrs. R. Percival received a request from her grandfather and sister to permit their having one farewell interview with her before her departure from Beverly. To this request however she returned a peremptory negative: nor could all their subsequent entreaty prevail with her to allow them one personal adieu, either with herself

self or her children. On this disappointment of their kind wishes, they determined to write to her to convey their hope of endeavoring to secure the future happiness which would await on her future right conduct. That from Mr. Spencer was as follows.

“ The solicitude, my child, which from
“ your earliest years I have experienced
“ upon your account, still possesses my
“ heart. Instead of lessening, it increases
“ with time and circumstances, and very
“ dear to me is your future well-doing.
“ It was from this cause that I was so ur-
“ gent for an interview before your leav-
“ ing, probably for ever, your native
“ country : not, as might perhaps be sug-
“ gested to you, for any purpose of recriminating, but to endeavor to impress
“ upon your mind the great importance of
“ the *present* and the *future*.

“ You are now, Eleanor, going into a
“ new world, where you will form new
“ connexions,

“ connexions and, I hope, acquire new
“ habits. Your person ; your understand-
“ ing ; your fortune, will render you con-
“ spicuous in any country, and give you an
“ opportunity of selecting for your inti-
“ mate acquaintance the most eligible peo-
“ ple in your vicinity. On your proper
“ choice, in this respect, much will de-
“ pend. Hitherto, you have been unfor-
“ tunately connected, or I trust your edu-
“ cation would have produced happier
“ effects. Mrs. Mitchel and Mrs. Quaintly
“ hold tenets that, upon a cursory view,
“ appear to be totally opposite to those of
“ each other ; but they have the same de-
“ structive tendency—that of weakening
“ the comforting reliance on a superin-
“ tending and immediate Providence ; a
“ doctrine which every sentence in the
“ Gospel inculcates ; which every precept
“ in the Old Testament enforces ; which
“ reason and experience must confirm,
“ and which never was questioned but by
“ modern sectaries.

“ If

“ If GOD is inattentive to our wants
 “ and distresses, or has bound Himself—
 “ for He cannot be bound—by immutable
 “ laws, of what avail is that duty of prayer
 “ so strongly enjoined in every page of the
 “ Sacred Writings! Why are we com-
 “ manded to ask for that which, whether
 “ we ask or not, will or will not happen,
 “ *as has* “ to use Mrs. Quaintly’s language,
 “ *been pre-ordained by fate*”—or to adopt
 “ Mrs. Mitchel’s words, *is established by*
 “ *the necessity of second causes.* The first
 “ of these women is looked upon with
 “ contempt by the last, who professes her-
 “ self to be a Materialist only because
 “ Materialism is more genteel than the
 “ doctrine of Calvin, for they alike ex-
 “ clude the Almighty Father of the uni-
 “ verse from the power of giving relief to
 “ the distresses of His children, however
 “ much they may humble themselves
 “ before him and entreat forgiveness and
 “ blessing, because it will interfere with
 “ the

“ the *decrees of fate*, or will subvert the
“ *necessary order of second causes*.

“ Avoid, my dear Eleanor, as you would
“ know real happiness, these absurd and
“ conceited opinions ; one of which leads
“ to presumption, on a supposition of self-
“ election ; and the other to a scepticism,
“ still if possible more dangerous.

“ A Materialist imagines himself to be
“ a mere machine—wound up and set in
“ motion like a clock, and that he must
“ necessarily perform his points to the
“ hours, minutes, and moments in his ap-
“ pointed round, without even allowing to
“ his Maker the powers which a common
“ mechanic claims over his workmanship,
“ of impeding or accelerating its motions
“ at pleasure, or as occasion may require.

“ A Materialist, whose narrow mind
“ cannot conceive the possibility of Omni-
“ presence, may ask “ Whether you be-
“ lieve that GOD can concern Himself
“ about the death of every chicken”—
“ meaning to enquire in contemptuous
“ language

“ language whether it be your opinion that,
“ the Almighty superintends the trifling
“ occurrences of our existence. Without
“ retorting that these occurrences are not
“ trifling *to us*—let him be answered in
“ the words of the Teacher of the Gospel
“ Faith; who in several parts of His testa-
“ ment assures us that we are the imme-
“ diate care of our Heavenly Father; that
“ even ravens and sparrows fall not to the
“ ground without His cognizance, and
“ that consequently we, “ *the very hairs*
“ *of whose heads are all numbered,* who are
“ of more value than *many birds,*” are ob-
“ jects of His particular attention—an in-
“ controvertible argument, to every one
“ who admits the authority of Christian
“ doctrines, against the tenets of those sec-
“ taries from which I feel it particularly
“ incumbent upon me to warn you, as I
“ am well assured that your mind has been
“ injured by their opinions—opinions de-
“ structive to the present comfort as well
“ as to the future happiness of mortals.

“ What

“ What man can be at rest in a ship, upon
“ a stormy ocean, amidst dangerous rocks,
“ without a pilot ? But under the direction
“ of a guide *who cannot err*, what man,
“ not negligent on his own part, but must
“ repose in conscious safety ? amid the ap-
“ pearances of the most alarming danger.

“ You will not wonder at my insisting so
“ much upon this subject, when you re-
“ collect the conversation that about three
“ weeks back, passed between you and Mr.
“ Browne at Sir James Leeson’s : this
“ was particularly reported to me by Mrs.
“ Maynard, who was greatly shocked at
“ the opinions which you then expressed.

“ To touch upon more general subjects,
“ yet to avoid, as much as possible, a retro-
“ spection which could not be more pain-
“ ful to you than to myself, I wish you to
“ consider, with the deepest attention, the
“ nature ; the degrees ; the tendency, of
“ vice and of criminal proceedings. *De-*
“ *termine to reflect*, and I need not point at

“ particulars; yet so anxious am I for your
“ ensuing conduct and consequent felicity,
“ that I cannot forbear to write what
“ may be, and I hope, is unnecessary.

“ Sudden starts of error—of even crime,
“ occasioned by an impetus of passion or
“ believed necessity, will, upon a duly expressed
“ contrition and every possible reparation, be not only forgiven but forgotten by all the truly good and great of the human species. Nay more; it is possible for the offender to rise even higher in the opinion of men of sense; candor, and true rectitude, than he stood before his fall, because from his fall he may have acquired the additional virtue of humility, and a consequent increase of the truly Divine attribute of charity. His error may likewise have so strongly enforced the necessity of guarding more sedulously against the incitement of vice, that virtue may become firmly rooted in his soul.

“ A

“ A deliberate, and continued depar-
 “ ture from the great path of RIGHT, is
 “ doubtless more apt to leave a stain upon
 “ the deviator, should he even at length
 “ recover the track of rectitude, than a
 “ sudden start into steps still more flagrantly
 “ erroneous. Yet even this *persevering* of-
 “ fender may be pardoned; and in time may
 “ recover his reputation, if he can evince
 “ the sincerity of his penitence and prove
 “ the reality of the alteration in his mind
 “ by the alteration of his conduct: condi-
 “ tions upon which the Almighty Father of
 “ Mercies will forgive crimes of the highest
 “ atrocity, and will cleanse and receive to
 “ His paternal love, the returning sinner.
 “ If the prayers of one mortal can pre-
 “ vail for the good of another, you Eleanor
 “ will in that respect have great and pecu-
 “ liar advantages, for those from whom
 “ you would least expect kindness, will
 “ pray for you with the greatest fervency.
 “ Your son George makes it his election

“ to remain in England. He therefore
“ shall be my care, and shall from me
“ receive fortune sufficient to make him
“ happy. To him you will write; and from
“ him we will be contented to hear ac-
“ counts of your welfare, without requiring
“ the name which you may chuse to as-
“ sume, or the place of your residence.
“ Upon this you may depend, as I give
“ you my solemn promise for it in the
“ name of all my family.

“ You cannot but see that my sole aim
“ is to assist your future tranquillity. I
“ therefore entreat you freely to inform me
“ if there is any thing I can do that will
“ more effectually promote it.

“ I much wish, my dear, to know the
“ state of your mind, and entreat you to
“ write to me or your sister before you
“ leave this kingdom.

“ Give my blessing to the children. You
“ might safely have trusted their coming to
“ receive a personal benediction. I should
“ not

“ not have attempted to injure their parents
“ in their estimation. Is it possible, Elea-
“ nor, knowing me as you do; that you
“ could apprehend any thing of such a
“ tendency ?

“ Tell your husband I shall be glad to
“ hear that he has laid a foundation for
“ ensuing happiness. Mrs. Percival, will, I
“ hope, begin to consider there is a state of
“ existence subsequent to this.

“ Your sister writes for herself. I do not,
“ therefore, say any thing particularly re-
“ specting her sentiments; but for the rest
“ of your relations, I am an amanuensis.
“ As it is now improbable that you will
“ ever meet again, till you stand in the
“ presence of the Merciful Creator of men
“ and angels, they send you an assurance
“ of their prayers for the future felicity of
“ yourself and family—for felicity conse-
“ quent upon an endeavor to do that which
“ only *can* insure it upon a permanent
“ foundation. In this *must* be included

“ the most perfect CHRISTIAN forgiveness
“ of all injuries and injurious intention ;
“ and that this is yours with sincerity, I
“ from them, re-affirm, that when your
“ last hours arrive, your heart may not be
“ oppressed by the want of that pardon
“ which it is probable will then be deemed
“ of inestimable value ; so changed will be
“ our opinion, in *that* GREAT MOMENT, of
“ many circumstances which may now ap-
“ pear contemptible.

“ I feel myself utterly incapable to ex-
“ press the degree of anxiety under which
“ I labor on your account. Mere exhor-
“ tation, would, I think, be useless, except
“ your *reason* aids my wishes ; which it will
“ not do, while you are surrounded by
“ people whose interest it is to encourage
“ your continuance in the erroneous opi-
“ nions you have so unhappily imbibed—
“ opinions I repeat not more destructive to
“ present, than to future felicity, however
“ much they may flatter present passions.”

“ Allow

“ Allow yourself, my dear Eleanor, to
“ form the idea *of our next meeting*. Con-
“ sider in what *place*, and in what *company*.
“ it will be!!! May the Great JUDGE
“ before whom we shall both assuredly
“ stand, give it me to see my child with
“ gladness—to rejoice in the approving
“ sentence which, consequent upon her
“ return to rectitude, she will receive from
“ Him whose decrees are irreversibile—to
“ behold her then angelic countenance
“ beam with light and gratitude for more
“ than expected mercy—to witness her
“ entrance into mansions of inconceivable
“ Bliss and Glory !

“ The alternative—No ; it is too sad !
“ Too shocking to be painted EVEN AS A
“ POSSIBILITY.

“ *May the Great GOD of Heaven pre-*
“ *serve you from it !!!*

“ I will now take my last farewell. Pain-
“ ful as to me is our separation, I still am
“ thankful that it is determined on.

“ In a new country, your fame will be
“ unspotted. You will not have any con-
“ temptuous opinions to encounter; no
“ injurious acquaintance to shake off; no
“ appearances, respecting an alteration of
“ sentiment to attend to; no prejudices to
“ conquer; no *apparently* new habits to
“ acquire. Perfectly independent—with
“ no one to fear, your work will be easy;
“ your life to begin; your path to chuse.
“ On these accounts, my dear child [it
“ soothes me to hope I may henceforth
“ have cause to use that epithet], I rejoice
“ at the idea of your departure, though the
“ circumstance, singly considered, wounds
“ my paternal affection. If *you* resolutely
“ step forward in the path of rectitude,
“ your children, your husband, and his
“ mother will follow. You may be fol-
“ lowed by numbers, and be blessed as
“ their leader to a glorious salvation.
“ *Should* your mind take this turn so fer-
“ vently prayed for by *every one here*, it
“ may

“may be proper to guard you against an
 “extreme, sometimes consequent upon a
 “conviction of former error—that of des-
 “pair to obtain forgiveness. But remem-
 “ber, my dear, that nothing *can* exceed
 “the goodness of Him *“who called us*
 “*into being to be blest:*” that the creature
 “cannot be more merciful than the Crea-
 “tor: that where man only forgives, GOD;
 “upon repentance, will reward: that *no*
 “*crime* can exclude His desire for our
 “return. *And how often can I say,*
 “The prodigal son: the lost sheep: the
 “reception of the laborer at the eleventh
 “hour—all exemplify His readiness to re-
 “ceive us. And hath He not given us
 “His word that “He will cleanse us from
 “*all* our iniquities, and wash us from our
 “secret sins; which, though they be as
 “scarlet, shall be white as snow, and though
 “they be red like crimson, shall be as
 “wool?” It is impossible for anything to
 “be more expressive of the abundant mercy
 “of

H 5

“ of

“ of the universal Parent to his returning
 “ children, or more convincing that His
 “ care and His love are unceasing. To
 “ Him, my child, my dear child ! I com-
 “ mit you and yours. If my prayers have
 “ prevalency, our next meeting will be
 “ joyful beyond human imagination.

“ Again farewell. I linger to conclude.
 “ This will, perhaps, be the last letter I
 “ shall ever write. When you hear of my
 “ death, believe that one of my latest res-
 “ pirations was drawn to invoke the Al-
 “ mighty’s mercy on my Eleanor.

“ HENRY SPENCER.”

Most of our readers have hastily turned over the preceding pages, to examine if they contained any fun or story, but observing, by a quick glance, that there was nothing in them except dull admonitions from an old man, they uttered the monosyllable “ stuff !” and laid down the book. Some few read them through, then gaped, and complained

complained of being tired, while two or three good meaning people said, “It is well intended, to be sure, *but I doubt it will not take.*”

We thank these candid friends for their kindness, and without apologizing to light minds, will proceed with our narrative by saying, that when Mrs. R. Percival had perused the above letter from her venerable sire, she was agitated to an extreme, and in her frenzy, cursed the hour that brought her into existence. She then reproached her husband; his mother; her son, and every one who came near, whether concerned, or not, in the transaction which occasioned his writing. Subsidng at length into some degree of quiet, though the fervor of her spirits still continued high, she returned by the messenger the following reply.

“Crush me not, sir—crush me not to the earth! My heart is broken! My
H 6 “heart

“ heart is broken! Oh! forbear your kind-

“ nefs! It kills me. I do not merit it.

“ May GOD grant—but I cannot pray.

“ Pray for me. You will; you say you

“ will; but do not tell me so any more.

“ I could bear your *reproaches*. I was pre-

“ pared for them; but your blessing I can-

“ not, cannot—I know not what I would

“ say.

“ We go to-morrow. I cannot write

“ to my sister: tell her so, and with my

“ love to—to whom? I cannot say to

“ whom, nor add another line.

“ Once your's with duty and affection,

“ E. P.”

When Mr. Spencer read this half-distracted letter, he was deeply concerned for his unhappy grandchild, yet gathered some hope from her evident distress, that she was not invulnerable, and that in time she would duly consider, and amend the tenor of her conduct. He shed some paternal tears,

tears, and he prayed for her return to virtue and to happiness, then leaned upon the hope of her penitence which her letter had raised, and trusted to Him whose mercy he implored.

Mrs. George Abington likewise wrote a most pathetic and affectionate letter to the afflicted lady ; but as we so lately fatigued our subjects with lessons of dull morality, we will spare them the trouble of even skipping over any more such “ stupid pages ” at present ; though so great is our respect for the writer of the epistle, that but for the above consideration we certainly should present it to our readers, as the mixture of sorrow ; pity ; disapprobation ; affection ; forgiveness, and hope of better things and better days for her wretched sister, was so judicious, and expressed with such tenderness, that were we to insert it, her character would necessarily shine with redoubled lustre. To this letter, admirable and kind as it was, she received no other reply than
the

the implication of its being received in the note to Mr. Spencer.

As it was the intention of Mr. Percival to remove from Beverly as privately as possible, he determined to go a week sooner than even those who were necessarily entrusted with some of his affairs, supposed that he would; and the day after the receipt of the preceding letters was fixed for the departure of the family; but now, as Mrs. R. Percival had mentioned this circumstance in her reply to her grandfather, they resolved to prevent any more attempts for an interview, by setting off at twelve o'clock on the ensuing night. At this hour then the gentleman and his lady; his mother; his sons, Stephen and Robert, with the two young ladies, actually left Beverly forever, and proceeding to London, continued there a few days in private lodgings to settle their last concerns. They went afterwards to Dartmouth, and taking ship at that port, sailed for the great Western Continent.

CHAP.

CHAP. CXVIII.

Mrs. Mitchel's departure from Beverly.

THE intelligence of the departure of the Percivals was received at the Aviary with unfeigned sorrow, arising from those qualities which stamp on man the image of his Maker, and which alone can fit him for the company and friendship of Celestial Beings. Had their continuance at the Lodge been consistent with their own honor, and had they evinced real contrition for their past conduct, the Spencers would have extended the most perfect forgiveness, and have meliorated to the utmost of their power their future situation : but their crimes were of such a nature that nothing could restore the public opinion.

As

As the reader may perhaps wonder that no mention has lately been made of Mrs. Mitchel, we will stop to say that this adroit governante, concluding that she could not reap any farther advantage from the family, had set off the evening before they left Beverly, for Bath, where she found her honorable friend Mrs. Catharine Lumley. These two worthy gentlewomen immediately entered into a very lucrative mode of living, by setting up a fashionable gaming table and keeping a house of genteel resort for ladies who were disposed to amuse themselves with gallants, and for gentlemen whose business it was to admire the ladies, either upon the matrimonial or anti-matrimonial system, as best suited their pecuniary convenience: for the good gentlewoman of honorable extraction had so much reduced her patrimonial property, that she condescended to pursue some very *dis*-honorable methods to retrieve her circumstances; and no scheme was so conducive

ducive to her design as that which she adopted; nor any person more calculated to promote it, than our ci-devant preceptress at Beverly.

CHAP. CXIX.

A few trifling Arrangements.

IT was our intention to have taken up our abode at Spencer Aviary in our last chapter, but a recollection of Mrs. Mitchel intervened, and we did not think it decent to connect the account which we gave of her and her associate, with any thing relative to the Spencers.

If the reader will not be offended with a little retrogradation, we will just observe that during the arrangement of the preceding business, our friends confined themselves to their domestic party, forbearing, from tenderness to the Percivals, to make any entertainments, or to receive congratulations from the neighbouring gentry, during their continuance in Beverly. As soon as
the

the preliminary articles were signed, Mr. Montague (with whom Mr. Ruffel settled the accounts of his late brother in a generous manner); Mrs. Carter, and the witnesses, all of them being handsomely rewarded, returned to London, and the Bishop of the diocese, finding that his interference would not be necessary, left the Aviary and repaired to Mr. Bullion's, where he was disgusted with the virulence of their invectives against people with whom they were to have been so intimately connected. They had indeed ample cause for displeasure, but their abuse exceeded the bounds of decency; on which account the prelate made a speedy departure.

Some of the visitants staid a considerable time longer, and participated in the subsequent festivity of the scene.

As soon as Mr. Percival had left the Lodge, George was summoned from Cambridge, and received with the greatest kindness by all his friends. Mr. Spencer immediately

mediately settled an annuity upon him, and it was determined that his general residence, when he chose to quit Cambridge, should be at the rectory ; Mr. Barker having always been fond of this his youngest pupil.

Miss Abington, who was soon to enter into the conjugal life, wrote to her sister Patty a succinct account of the occurrences which had taken place at Beverly since her visit into Essex ; to which she received an answer expressive of the highest degree of astonishment, but containing no congratulations, upon the event, to any of the family ; nor to her sister on her intended nuptials, of which she had given her information. Colchester, she said, was so delightful a place, that she believed she should continue in it till near Christmas ; an intention with which no one was displeased, as her company was an allay to the general felicity.

CHAPTER CXX.

A short Chapter.

MISS Abington is now Mrs. Barker, and is fixed at the rectory; a very elegant, rural habitation, situated in a church-yard, deemed one of the pleasantest in the kingdom; the church having been built near the top of a hill which commanded a prospect into five counties.

The Chancellor returned to London with the Bishop and his lady, soon after the business of the family was perfectly settled. Mr. and Mrs. Herbert staid a few days longer, and then left Beverly, with an intent to return at the celebration of the weddings of Letitia and Lucy Spencer.

Mr. Fonnereau was the last that took
his

his leave. He was unwilling to go from Matilda, for whom he made proposals to Mr. Spencer, who had no other objection to him than the versatility of his disposition. But as he had a good understanding and an agreeable temper, he was not absolutely refused; he therefore looked forward with hope, as Matilda was too artless to disguise her prejudice in his favor.

Our heroine is now within view of enjoying as much pure happiness as can fall to the lot of humanity. Mistress at an early age, of one of the most beautiful situations, surrounded by one of the noblest estates in the country—endued with the power of obliging all those whom she best loved:—blessed with the most sincere and ardent affection of a man who for mind and person was scarcely ever equalled; certainly never excelled—re-united, in a sister, to the first friend of her heart—restored to parents and other relations greatly beloved, after believing herself abandoned by every human

human being—what can exceed her felicity? What more on this side Heaven can she wish to attain? Only this—a moral certainty of never being separated from the man whose affection she returns, during the remaining term of their existence; and this she hopes will, in a short space of time, be added to the blessings of which she is already in possession.

CHAP. CXXI.

Shorter than the foregoing.

THE Lodge, which Mr. E. Spencer purchased of Mr. Percival, was, as we think we have somewhere observed, a handsome residence; situated in a pleasant part of a romantic park of considerable extent. It was generally supposed that this estate was intended to be presented to George, by his great grandfather: but the good and wise man objected to this proposal, which was made to him by a Mr. Wrihten, a distant relation of Mrs. Percival's paternal family, on account of its being probable that such an act would assist to perpetuate the memory of his father; as the "Percivals at the Lodge" was a phrase too familiar in the country,
and

and now too opprobrious, to be continued to a branch of the family which it was hoped would merit a more respectable reputation. The Lodge was, therefore, fixed upon for the residence of Mr. Clifford and his Lucy, who it was presumed would enter the Hymeneal state at the same time that Letitia gave Spencer Aviary to Lord Andover—Rose-Valley being too distant from Beverly for the approbation of the sisters.

We might here finish our history and take leave of our loving and beloved readers, as nothing of consequence remains to be related; but we are apprehensive some of our friends would think it an affront, were they to be excluded from an invitation to the weddings, after their toil in attending our heroine through her mortifications, and more real distresses. We will therefore pursue her destiny a few days longer and then consign her happiness,

which is only inferior to that of the celestial beings, to whom, in mind and person, she was blest with so near a resemblance.

C H A P. CXXII.

Shorter still.

SOON after the removal of the Percivals, all the tenants of the Aviary estate were invited to the mansion, to be presented to their lovely young landlady; but when she addressed them, she told them that as long as their venerable patron was given to the wishes of his children, they were to consider themselves as his tenants only. She then enquired after their respective families, and said that she hoped soon to have the satisfaction of entertaining their wives and daughters.

Every one was charmed by her beauty and behaviour, and they all endeavoured to

excuse themselves for appearing with the Percivals on the day of the intended entrance. Though some of them were reprehensible for their forwardness on that occasion, they all received the most ample pardon from the generous family, and returned free from the apprehensions with which some of them had been oppressed, of lying under the displeasure of their good old landlord. To remove, indeed, these apprehensions had been the principal cause of the summons for their appearance.

The country was now rang with the loveliness, goodness, and other shining qualities of Miss Spencer. Every mortal talked of her excellencies; every lady submitted to her obvious superiority; every gentleman envied the happy Andover, though all confessed that he alone was worthy of her favor.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

Which exhibits Arcadia in England.

ON Tuesday next, at Mr. Spencer's appointment, Letitia and Lucy Spencer, without any undue affectation of reluctance, though not devoid of that truly feminine and fascinating timidity which, whether our present race of amazonian heroines hold it, or hold it not, in estimation, can never be struck out of the list of female attractions, by a proper estimator of female excellence, have consented to perfect their own happiness by completing that of Lord Andover and Mr. Clifford.

The weddings of people in their situation could not possibly be kept private ; nor was

there any cause why privacy should be affected. All the genteel people in the neighbourhood were therefore invited. Mr. and Mrs. Herbert were summoned from London. The bishop and his lady from Chichester palace; and the Chancellor, who had promised to be present, from his country seat. Mr. Fonnereau had made it his request to be present on this occasion, and for that reason an invitation was likewise sent to his mother and sisters, as they all were solicitous for the union of Charles with the gentle Matilda.

As it was the wish of the Chancellor, who was consulted on every occasion of importance, &c. that the tenants might attend, when Lord Andover married the heiress of the Aviary, they were all invited, with their wives, and families; and open house being kept at the Aviary; the Shrubbery; the Lodge; Mr. Barker's, and Mr. Abington's, almost as great an appearance was necessarily exhibited, as on the day of
Mrs.

Mrs. Percival's mortification. By means of this general invitation, the minds of the gentry who had accepted that of the lady last mentioned, to join her cavalcade (and who apprehended their being, for that reason, looked upon rather coolly by the Spencers) were at once conciliated to the present possessors ; and scarce was there a creature, the Bullions and the Quaintlys excepted, who was not glad of the change, for none of Mr. Percival's family were held in estimation, though their expected importance led many to seek their favor. George, indeed, was always looked upon to be different from the rest ; but he was too young to be considered a part.

As daughter to Lady Herbert, Miss Catherine was invited upon the ensuing occasion, but though she possessed a singular degree of effrontery, she could not summon sufficient resolution to appear before Letitia, whom she very heartily hated ; as she concluded her infamous conduct to this lady

must be known, she therefore pleaded a prior engagement, and went to Tunbridge.

Miss Patty—or as we ought now to term her—Miss Abington, sent her *compliments* to the party at Spencer Aviary; she would have attended their festivities had she been at Beverly, but her promise was given to her friends at Colchester to lengthen her visit, and she could not disappoint their expectations.

The coolness of these excuses gave pain to her mother, but the rest of the party, and even her sisters, were very well pleased at her absence, so disagreeable to them was her conduct, upon almost every occasion: though to other people she could behave with a tolerable degree of pleasantry.

At the particular entreaty of both the brides, Mr. Spencer consented to be the nuptial father; for so fond were all the young people of this admirable man, that except he was a party, their joy seemed to want an addition.

The

The church of Beverly stood within a quarter of a mile from the park pale of the Aviary, and as the season was fine, the Chancellor, who desired to have the ceremonial as public as possible, made a proposal for their walking thither. It was rather against the wish of the sisters to be so openly exposed to view, but as his lordship thought it expedient, they acquiesced, and as if for a morning's ramble, without any ceremonious arrangement, walked from the Aviary about eleven o'clock, while the bells in several neighbouring churches were heard ringing, and the band of music belonging to a regiment quartered at a town about six miles distant, very unexpectedly appeared, and attended the company. This was secretly ordered by Mr. Ruffel, who was so fond of harmony that he protested a full chorus would mitigate the pains of the torture inflicted by the old Romish inquisition.

The dress of the ladies—the conduct of the bridegrooms—the congratulations of

friends—the rejoicings of the country, with the succeeding felicity of the parties most particularly concerned, we will leave for the exercise of our readers' imagination, which however, must be festive in the highest degree, to form a just idea of the scenes at Spencer Aviary, for several days succeeding the nuptial one. Every species of rational amusement was there to be enjoyed; every pleasure that could raise and refine the mind, while it charmed the senses. People of all ages, dispositions, and conditions, met with the most cordial reception: the hungry and naked were fed and clothed; while the rich and gay were delighted with splendid entertainments: the aged and the young were equally gratified, as there was no undue levity to displease the first, nor a precise observance of etiquette to disgust the other: true freedom and real delicacy, uniting with genuine politeness, formed the manners of the company.

Having conducted our favorites to as
much

much felicity as sublunary beings can experience, we will leave them to enjoy the peculiar blessings of their situation, and to the exercise of those social, moral, and religious virtues, which, though they do not always produce prosperity in this world, never fail to bring peace (which is another word for happiness) to the bosoms which they inhabit; nor to ensure the highest and brightest reward in the life ensuing; a life endued with more delights than our present ideas can lead us even to wish for, because they are greatly superior to all human conception.

ADDENDA.

THE history contained in the foregoing pages, was written in the earlier part of this century, but for very sufficient causes was never before published. Since the anecdotes which composed it were collected, we have been favored, by some intimates of the principal family, with several subsequent incidents respecting the celebrated village of Beverly, and as we believe every one who ever heard the name of the Spencers must be interested in all that concerns them, it is with a pleasure resulting from the principles of urbanity, that we present them to the public.

Our hero and heroine, long since known by the title of Earl and Countess of Andover, a distinction from which they have
been

been often heard to declare that they never experienced the least gratification, were, when our last accounts arrived, living in continued, or, if possible, additional happiness; and what is seldom the case, they each of them expressed a wish to survive the other, unless it were indulged to them to resign this earthly existence at the same moment. Death never appeared to them in colors the least gloomy, but when they considered the pain the one left by the other would experience, which pain each wished to be fated to endure that the other might be exempted from its poignancy.

We were told by a gentleman who lately removed into their neighbourhood, that it was astonishing to observe the admiration in which every branch of the family were held by all ranks of people. That Lord Andover said so and so, upon such or such a subject, was argument sufficient to settle any debate, however consequential; and in matters under female cognizance—the education

cation of children; the management (which she disdained not, on proper occasions, to inspect) of family concerns—whatever Lady Andover said or did, was right beyond question. With respect to the trifling article of dress; if she appeared in such a fashion it must be pleasing, because the figure which she made in it was exquisitely beautiful: nor could any mode be general which she did not adopt. Indeed, whenever, to avoid singularity, she made alteration in her appearance, she was always said to look better than before, as every thing she put on, became her face and figure. For several years her beauty was thought by every one to encrease; the peace in which she lived, and the salubrity of country air, giving an additional glow to her cheeks: brightness to her eyes, and sweetness, if more sweetness could be added, to her countenance.

We could entertain our readers with volumes respecting this affectionate couple—this truly exemplary pair, but we will
only

only say in a few words, that as they were amongst the best, they were also to be numbered with the happiest of their species—the joy of numerous surrounding friends—the patrons of their tenants and dependents—the universal benefactors of all the poor and distressed within their knowledge: following with great exactness the precepts and example given them by the good Mr. Spencer, which are recorded at large in the first volume, chapter the eighth, of the preceding history.

With regard to the exalted man last mentioned, he lived to see the birth of the third child of his beloved Letitia. To his latest hour, he was the delight of all with whom he conversed; nor did he ever experience the least diminution in his faculties. His transit from this world to the next was evidently quite easy: his appearance like that of a child going to sleep; and when his almost adoring friends (who perceived by his manner of breathing that his soul

was

was going to be freed from its earthly fetters) drew near the sofa upon which he reclined, they thought his countenance perfectly angelic; and with his head resting upon the bosom of his grand-daughter, he went off with a smile so strongly impressed, that it continued till he was enclosed in his last receptacle.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Spencer made the Shrubbery their occasional residence; but they were generally visitors at their daughter's. The happiness of this amiable pair need not be expatiated upon. The sorrow they experienced upon losing their little Letitia, was abundantly over-balanced by their subsequent joy at recovering her.

Mr. and Mrs. George Abington removed from the Aviary upon the death of Mr. Spencer (to the sincere regret of Lord and Lady Andover), at the earnest request of his father and mother, who after Mrs. Barker went to the rectory, wished for the company of this happy couple, as their
daughter

daughter Patty chose to live chiefly with a friend, or rather an acquaintance, that she had in Effex, who flattered her foibles, with a hope of being benefitted by her death; as to secure the adulation of which she was so fond, she artfully intimated an intention of making a will in her friend's favor. Miss Patty was never heard to mention the Percivals from the time of their degradation. Her conduct to Lady Andover was sullen and haughty. Her determination, therefore, to absent herself, was very agreeable to all the family.

Mr. Ruffel could scarcely be said to have a home, as every one of his friends were striving who should have the most of his company, which was always lively and entertaining.

Mr and Mrs. Barker lived a life of enviable tranquillity; both setting an example too rarely given by people in their situation in the present day: he seeming to incline to that obsolete opinion of its
being

being the duty of a clergyman to think something of his parishioners, even when he was not in the church ; and she actually believing herself to be of the same species of those, who in polite estimation, were reckoned “ *beneath her notice* ;” and while her husband was rendering himself beloved, as well as revered, by the rectitude and affability of his conduct, she was securing the admiration of all around her by a condescension void of meanness ; and by relieving as well as instructing every one who would accept her assistance.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifford resided at the Lodge, now by general consent termed the Lawn. As their lives, minds and manners were in strict conformity with those of their friends at the Aviary, from whom they were seldom two days separated, their enjoyments were similar, and their felicity equal ; except that the former distress of Letitia and Seymour occasioned them to experience the happiness of their lot in a
higher

higher degree than they could have done had they never been in trouble. For amongst other various evidences of the kindness of Providence to the children of men, this is one—that the sorrows we at one period endure, sweeten the blessings which generally succeed, and that none can be so happy in prosperity as those whom adversity has previously visited.

The affection between the sisters seemed to increase with their years, while the sympathy which united Mr. Clifford and Lord Andover, gathered strength from time; and their children appeared to be the children of one family.

Matilda Spencer, within two years after the marriage of her sisters, gave her hand to Mr. Fonncreau, whose extreme vivacity being checked by his good sense, he became an excellent husband, and a valuable addition to the friends at Beverly, whom he and his lady frequently visited. On account of this union, Mr. Clifford kept his
house

house at Rose-Valley as an occasional residence for himself and his lady, or any of their family. It had been his intention to part with this estate, for which he was offered a very considerable price; but he changed his design on finding that the management of it, which he resigned entirely into the hands of Mr. Fonnereau, would give that gentleman a considerable increase of consequence in his own neighbourhood. The dowager, Mrs. Fonnereau, with her daughters, Charlotte and Maria, removed to a smaller habitation, which they called the cottage, at about half a mile's distance; from whence they visited the young couple almost every day.

Caroline Spencer, the youngest of the sisters, from being one of the liveliest girls in the world, became the most pensive. She was always retiring to solitude, and occasioned considerable solicitude to all the family. At length Mr. Ruffel pronounced her case to be love, and undertook to discover

cover

cover the object of her affection. He suspected, and at length ascertained this object to be George Percival. This young man, whose merit and modesty were equal, entertained the most ardent passion for *her*; but his fortune, at that time depending entirely on Mr. Spencer, he disdained to let his attachment appear, lest he should be suspected of being swayed by motives of interest. When Mr. Ruffel was convinced of the mutuality of the affection, he soon effected an union between the lovers, and purchased for them the house formerly inhabited by Mr. Wharton, and now exposed to sale in consequence of that gentleman's having outrun his income. Mr. Spencer was generous, almost to extravagance, on this occasion; and Mr. Ruffel, to obviate any obloquy that might attach itself to the name of Percival, proposed to give his own for it to this young ally. For this purpose an act of Parliament was soon after procured, and Mr. *George Ruffel junior*

junior was married to Miss Carolina Spencer, before the translation of the Patriarch, whose will secured to him a noble inheritance. Of the Percivals scarce any account was heard after they removed from Beverly. All the intelligence that ever was received of them was conveyed in a note to Mr. Barker, written in a hand which could not be recognized, and containing only the following lines.

“ As it is possible that some one in Beverly may have a wish to know whether the family which lately left the Lodge in that place, are living, this is written to acquaint such as have any solicitude on that head, that they arrived in safety to the place of their destination ; and to inform them that no farther intelligence will ever be given.”

This final farewell occasioned much concern to their philanthropic relations, and particularly to Mr. Spencer and Mrs. G. Abingdon, who had predetermined to write frequent

frequent and long letters to Mrs. R. Percival and the children, in hope of drawing their minds to a love of rectitude. But now that hope was blighted, and all that they could do, was to pray for their future happiness. Mr. Spencer's intention respecting his grand-daughter Elinor, being thus rendered abortive, he, in simple justice, gave George that share of his fortune to which his mother had an equitable title.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert generally resided in London, where they took a house next to that which was a part of the estate of Spencer Aviary. Mr. Herbert's success in business was so great, that it was soon in his power to have lived without its profits, but as, in process of time, he had several sons, he thought it right to continue in it till one of them should be old enough to succeed him in the lucrative operation.

The families above commemorated, were seldom long absent from each other. Sometimes they had a general meeting in
Warwick-

Warwickshire : sometimes in London : sometimes at Beverly ; and nothing could exceed the harmony which reigned amongst these friends whom congeniality of sentiment, still more than relationship, united.

Miss Bullion, as she informed her quondam lover, received proposals from the son of a nobleman, and very urgent was she with her father to accept of them, till he was introduced to her. She was then so disgusted with the unhappy deformity of his person, that not all his good sense, which (notwithstanding his compliance with his father's wishes in offering his addresses to this rich heiress) was more than what is usually possessed by young men, could induce her to admit his second visit. After the conclusion of this treaty, Miss Bullion lived till she was turned twenty-three, without the appearance of any lover that could be accepted : and this so increased the native acrimony of her disposition that nobody would live with her
who

who could avoid it. To her father she was faucy; to her mother insolent, continually upbraiding her with the want of elegance in her person and manner; protesting that it was owing to her vulgarity that no people of condition sought an alliance with the family. This undutiful treatment from her daughter so fretted the poor old woman that it assisted a tendency in her constitution to a decline: and soon fulfilled the wishes of her only child, by procuring for her a sudden dismissal from this scene of trouble. After her removal, Miss endeavoured to display the brilliancy of her charms by appearing in the elegant mourning which she had projected on the supposed death of Mr. Spencer. But before the expiration of the usual time for making the first change in her fables, the young lady, upon returning from a morning visit, saw her under-maid, whom on account of a genteel person, and rather a pretty face, she treated with peculiar despotism, alight

from a carriage with Mr. Bullion, who had been with her to church, and had given her a title to his daughter's obedience by making her his wife. The effect this incident had upon the haughty girl, cannot easily be imagined. She raved about the house and garden like one frantic; venting her useless wishes that the life of the mother whom she had so tormented, had been continued. She then sank into a state of insensibility, and in this condition was carried to her chamber. Here she was suffered to vent the first effects of her fury, and to remain alone till weakness had rendered her in some degree calm. She was then visited by the new Mrs. Bullion, who having been educated as a gentlewoman, and possessing a good understanding with a sweet disposition, represented to her step-daughter the necessity of submitting to what was now past remedy; and assured her that the power with which she was invested should never
be

be unduly exercised. This propriety of conduct had an effect directly contrary to the intention of her mother-in-law, for it revived the fury of her resentment into such force that it was some days before she spoke like a reasonable creature. But we do not design to follow Miss Bullion through the violences of her disappointment and rage. Suffice it, that she was at length compelled to endure what she could not disannul; and had every year the additional mortification of witnessing the birth of a brother or a sister, till Mrs. Bullion had presented her husband with six children. Mrs. Bullion was then left a widow, by the death of her husband from the effects of an apoplexy.

Upon the birth of his first son, our Nabob had been seized with the mania *of establishing a family*, as the phrase is, amongst those who to ennoble the eldest, leave the rest of their children beggars. With this view he had purchased, at an immoderate

price, every freehold estate which was to be sold in any neighbouring county ; and in this manner did he expend almost the whole of the immense sum which he had brought with him from India. About ten thousand pounds alone remained of his accumulated money, and this sum, as he died intestate, was all that his daughters and youngest sons could claim to be divided among them as their patrimony. Mrs. Bullion was nobly provided for by the laws of England, which gave her the third of her husband's property, and from this she determined to save fortunes for the younger children. As she properly reflected upon the disappointment which Miss had experienced by her father's marriage, Mrs. Bullion promised also to provide for her as for her own, if she would only regulate her conduct by the rules of common decency and prudence. For this, the haughty girl was constrained to acknowledge obligations, and learning humility from her
lowered

lowered fortunes, she owned that the boon was more than she had merited.

Mrs. Mitchel, who, as we have already noticed, had connected herself with Mrs. Catherine Lumley, to whom the etiquette of the country gave the title of honorable : and for some time these ladies were successful in their *honorable* occupations. But detected at length in some *mal-practices*, and carried before an inexorable Magistrate, who laid a heavier fine upon them than they were able to pay : their furniture was sold and their reputation lost. After this, they attempted to rally, and were supported by some of the most distinguished characters in the upper circles ; but failing in all their endeavors to shine again at Bath, they were obliged to repair to London, and there to traffic in the same line with less *eclat*.

As Captain Millemont has cut some figure in the preceding pages, a part of our readers may be desirous to know more of his destiny. We therefore inform them

that he lingered under his wound for a considerable time without any hope of cure, as it turned to an inveterate disorder, and made the amputation of the limb unsafe when he became willing to undergo the operation. The honest sailor James Webster, was his constant attendant, and on his account, his wife was also received into employment. Millemont, whose vice was not avarice, well rewarded their attentive services; and from his bounty, and from that of the Spencers, the situation of these poor people was rendered very comfortable.



As it is with reluctance that we quit the Arcadian scenes at Beverley, we will once more look in upon our friends at the Aviary; where, opening the eye of our imagination, we behold Lord and Lady Andover, on one of the anniversaries of their wedding; and of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford's,

ford's, furrounded by all their friends. We see the elder part of the company looking with tranquil pleasure on the juvenile couples, who are delighted with the sports of their little ones on the lawn before the windows. We see rural happiness amongst people of the first importance, and the greatest simplicity amidst scenes of splendor; ease and elegance being characteristic of the place and company.

All the people in the vicinity join with gratitude to celebrate the return of the nuptial day. The EARL AND COUNTESS OF ANDOVER resound through the groves and gardens; but with ideas of purer pleasure we use simpler language, and hail the happiness of HENRY SEYMOUR SPENCER AND HIS LETITIA.



Having given a summary of the destiny of those who have acted the most conspicuous characters upon our theatre, we will now
take

take a farewell of all our readers who have attended us through the perils of our journey ; who have admitted our merits, and been lenient to our faults ; who have seen with approbation our endeavors to promote the cause of *morality* ; of *philanthropy* ; of *piety* ; who have good-naturedly been pleased with whatever entertainment they may have found in their peregrinations, and have allowed that some good may be collected even from a novel, decried as that species of writing is, by the superficial pedant, or the morose and fastidious scholar. The first does not dare to approve what the other condemns, lest his learning should be brought into question by those who have a reputation for profundity ; a character he is greatly desirous of acquiring, though it is totally opposite to the nature of his abilities.

The man of lore puts up a contemptuous lip at books which convey instruction in the garb of pleasantry, because he has
more

more industry than genius, and cannot enjoy either wit or humor. But to what, let him ask himself, do his own studies tend? He will reply—To inform the understanding, and amend the heart: an answer in which there is more assertion than proof, since for one who turns over the hallowed pages of the ancients to acquire their wisdom or to imbibe their virtues ten peruse them with a view to gain the reputation of learning, or to qualify themselves for some lucrative employment. We desire to have it understood, that it is far from our intent to depreciate the study of ancient history, for which we have a high veneration; we only wish to have it considered that that study does not absolutely monopolize improvement, and that it is perfectly necessary for some people to write for those who cannot read Latin and Greek; not by translating the works of ancient authors, because it is universally affirmed by linguists, that a translation cannot convey

vey their excellencies, but by original composition (if that can now be effected by even the brightest genius) in our native tongue. Learned men frequently despise the unlearned, and it is not unfrequent that the unlearned have a contempt for those who, skilled in the languages and sciences of antiquity, are somewhat destitute, if we may judge by their conduct and conversation, of the sense which is called COMMON; an observation which brings to our recollection an admirable aphorism of our great Fielding's—"That
 " it is as possible for a man to know some-
 " thing without having been at an uni-
 " versity, as it is to have been at an uni-
 " versity and know nothing."

It is not every flower from which honey can be gathered. Some afford only wax; but that is of equal utility to the industrious bee. The honey without the comb, would surfeit the hive: the comb without the honey, famish the community.

We

We have an excellent conceit in our ideas of a comparison between genius and honey; learning and honey-comb, but as it is now too late in our day to pursue it, we give the hint to those who may chuse to build upon the foundation; only making this friendly request to some few scholars of the present day—that they will be sedulous to fill the cells which may have been constructed under their pericraniums; with honey, or at least with something nourishing, lest in the winter of their age, their empty imaginations should starve upon mere syllables.

How far this witticism may be allowed to pass current we cannot determine. Some will laugh at it; some sneer, and others make it a matter of serious offence; but as we are invulnerable to the shafts of mere ill-nature, we will return to the amiable tribe of our perusers.

Follow, O ye lovely children of philanthropy, the native bias of your dispositions.

JUDGE

JUDGE FOR YOURSELVES ; let no arrogant dictator, by warping your sentiments, lead you, contrary to your benevolence, to condemn the offerings with which you may have been pleased and not injured, of a friend to your species. The brightest property of wisdom, is complacency ; the most deformed feature of folly—ill-nature.

Happiness is the end of life.

The means of happiness—universal kindness ; for if you give it, it will be returned.

PIETY, is the source of BENEVOLENCE. Those who love GOD, cannot hate MAN, nor envy the success and prosperity of a fellow creature. To the *pious* therefore, whom we know that we have nowhere offended, we commit our sentence ; and shall pride ourselves more upon their approbation, than on the favourable decision of—

TITLES, WEALTH, AND POWER.

FINIS.





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